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HERE AND THERE
IN
LONDON.

BY

J. EWING RITCHIE,

AUTHOR OF

"THE NIGHT-SIDE OF LONDON," "THE LONDON PULPIT," ETC.

"Then I saw in my dream, that, when they were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity; and at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair."

BUNYAN.

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LUDGATE HILL, E.C.

TO

HENRY AYSCOUGH THOMPSON, ESQ.

THIS WORK,

As a trifling Testimonial of Esteem,

IS DEDICATED,

BY HIS FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

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THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, FROM THE STRANGERS' GALLERY.

Not far from Westminster Abbey, as most of our readers know well, stands the gorgeous pile which Mr. Barry has designed, and for which, in a pecuniary sense, a patient public has been rather handsomely bled. Few are there who have looked at that pile from the Bridge—or from the numerous steamers which throng the river—or loitered round it on a summer's eve, without feeling some little reverence for the spot haunted by noble memories and heroic shades—where to this day congregate the talent, the wealth, the learning, the wisdom of the land. It is true, there are men—and that amiable cynic, Mr. Henry Drummond, is one of them—who maintain that the House of Commons is utterly corrupt—that there is not a man in that House but has his price; but we instinctively feel that such a general charge is false—that no institution could exist steeped in the demoralisation Mr. Drummond supposes—that his statement is rather one of those ingenious paradoxes in which eccentric men delight, than a sober exposition of the real truth. Mr. Drummond should know better. A poor penny-a-liner of a bilious temperament, without a rap in his pocket, might be excused such cynicism; but it does not become an elderly religious gentleman, well shaven—with clean linen, and a good estate. The House of Commons is a mixed assembly. It contains the fool of quality—the Beotian squire—the needy adventurer—the unprincipled charlatan; but these men do not rule it—do not form its opinion—do not have much influence in it. It is an assembly right in the main. Practically it consists of well-endowed, well-informed business men—men with little enthusiasm, but with plenty of common sense, and with more than average intellect, integrity, and wealth. Still more may be said. All that is great in our land is there. It boasts the brightest names in literature, in eloquence, and in law. Our island-mother has no more distinguished sons than those whose names we see figuring day by day in the division lists. Nowhere can a man see an assembly more honourable, more to be held in honour, for all that men do honour, than the British House of Commons, to which we now propose to introduce the reader.

We suppose it to be the night of an important debate, and that we have an order for the Strangers' Gallery. As the gallery will not hold more than seventy, and as each member may give an order, it is very clear that at four, when it will be thrown open, there will be more waiting for admission than the place can possibly contain, and that our only chance of getting in will be by being there as early as possible. When Mr. Gladstone brought forward the Budget, for instance,

there were strangers waiting for admission as early as ten in the morning. We go down about one, and are immediately directed to a low, dark cellar, with but little light, save what comes from a fire, that makes the place anything but refreshingly cool or pleasant. Being of a stoical p. 4 turn, we bear our lot in patience, not, however, without thinking that the Commons might behave more respectfully to the sovereign people, than by consigning them to this horrid blackhole. It is in vain we try to read—it is too dark for that; or to talk—the atmosphere is too oppressive even for that slight exertion; and so we wile away the time in a gentle reverie. As soon as this room is full, the rest of the strangers are put into the custody of the police in St. Stephen's hall. That is a far pleasanter place to wait in, for there is a continual passing to and fro of lords and lawyers, and M.P.'s and parliamentary agents; so that if you do not get into the House, you still see something going on; while in the cellar, you sit, as Wordsworth says—

> "Like a party in a parlour,
> All silent and all damned."

At length a bell rings. It is a welcome sound, for it announces that the Speaker is going to prayers. A few minutes, and another ringing makes us aware of the pleasing fact that that gentleman's devotions have already commenced. We joy to hear it, for we wish that the policeman who has had us in charge, and who has ranged us in the order of our respective *débûts*, will presently command the first five to get out their orders and proceed. The happy p. 5 moment at last arrives, and with a light heart we run up several flights of stairs, and find ourselves in The House.

But let us suppose we are fortunate enough to get a Speaker's order, which admits us to a gallery before the other, and with well stuffed leather cushions. It is hard work sitting all night on bare boards, as one does in the Strangers' Gallery. We get into the lobby just as the members are going in. What is that the officials are calling out? "Make way for the Speaker." Of course we will; and as we do so, immediately sweeps by us a gentleman in full-dress, with black breeches, silk stockings, shoes and buckles, and a light Court sword. "Is that the Speaker?" one asks. Oh, no; he is merely Serjeant-at-Arms—he is the man who bears the mace, and sits in a chair of state below the bar, and is terrible in the eyes of refractory, chiefly Irish, M.P.'s, and for all which duties, though he is of the noble family of the House of Bedford, and is brother to Lord John Russell, he condescends to receive £1,200 a year. Well, next to the Serjeant-at-Arms comes the Speaker—the man whose eye aspiring orators find it so difficult to catch. Mr. Speaker has a p. 6 judicious eye, and is wary as a belle of the season of her glances. Mr. Speaker is in full-dress; for he wears a flowing gown and a full-bottomed wig, and in his hand he carries a three-cocked hat; his train is borne by a train-bearer; behind him comes the Chaplain, and in this order they advance to the bar, and then to the table, where the Chaplain reads prayers prior to the formation of a House.

In the meanwhile we present ourselves to the doorkeeper of the Speaker's Gallery.

"Your name, sir?" demands that acute official.

"Nicks."

"Bricks, sir? I see no such name here."

"Oh, you must be mistaken—look again."

"No, sir, indeed there is no such name. I can't allow you to pass up."

"What! not Nicks?" we repeat, indignantly.

"Nicks, did you say, sir?"

"Yes, to be sure."

"Oh, yes, I have that name; but you said Bricks."

"No, I did not," growl we.

"Well, sir, I suppose it is all right; but if Mr. Nicks comes, you must come out."

"Of course," we reply, ironically, as we push the curtain on one side, and up we go. p. 7

At first we hardly know what we see. Chaos seems come again. On the opposition benches Lord Stanley is seated; on the ministerial the genteel Sir John Shelley is visible at one end, and the stout W. J. Fox at the other. All is confusion and disorder. No one but the Speaker seems to know what he is about. It is the hour devoted to private business, and Mr. Forster is bringing up bills like a retriever. He hands his bills to the clerks, while the Speaker, to an inattentive house, runs over their titles, and declares that they are read a first, or second, or third time, as the case may be. Then we hear him announce the name of some honourable M.P., who immediately rises and reads a statement of the petition he holds in his hand, with which he immediately rushes down and delivers it to one of the clerks, and which thereupon the Speaker declares is ordered to lie upon the table—but literally the petition is popped into a bag. In the meanwhile let us look around. Just below us is a small gallery for peers and ambassadors, and other distinguished personages. On either side of the house are galleries, very pleasant to sit, or lie, or occasionally p. 8 sleep in, and by-and-bye we shall see in them old fogies very red in the face, talking over the last bit of scandal, and young moustached lords or officers, sleeping away the time, to be ready, when

the House breaks up, for

> "Fresh fields and pastures new."

Opposite to us is the Reporters' Gallery. In the early days of parliament reporting was a thing much condemned. Sir Simonds d'Ewes, under the date March 5, 1641–2, gives us a special instance of this. Sir Edward Alford, member for Arundel, had been observed taking notes of a proposed declaration moved by Pym. Sir Walter Earle, member for Weymouth, upon this objected that he had seen "some at the lower end comparing their notes, and one of them had gone out." Alford having been called back, and given up his notes to the Speaker, D'Ewes then continues:—"Sir Henry Vane, senior, sitting at that time next me, said he could remember when no man was allowed to take notes, and wished it to be now forbidden." At present the gentlemen of the Press are taking it easy, and favouring each other with criticisms on the speakers by no means flattering. In a little while they will have to suspend their criticism and work hard enough. Above them are gilt wires, behind which we perceive the glare of silks and satins, and faintly—for otherwise attention would be drawn from the speakers below to the ladies above—but still clearly enough to make us believe—

> "That we can almost think we gaze
> Through golden vistas into heaven,"

we see outlines of female forms; and we wonder if the time will ever arrive when Lucretia Mott's dream shall be realised, and woman take her seat in the senate, side by side with the tyrant man. Under the Reporters' Gallery, and immediately facing us, sits the Speaker, in his chair of state. On his right are the Treasury Benches; on the left, those where the Opposition are condemned to sit, and fume and fret in vain. Between these benches is the table at which the clerk sits, and on which petitions, when they are received, are ordered to lie, and where are placed the green boxes, on which orators are very fond of striking, in order to give to their speeches particular force. At the end of this table commences the gangway, which is supposed to be filled with independent statesmen, and to whom, therefore, at particular times, the most passionate appeals are addressed. Lower down is the Bar of the House, where sits the sergeant-at-arms on a chair of state, with a sword by his side; but him we cannot see, as he is immediately under us. At the end of the table lies the "gilt bauble," as Cromwell called the mace—which is the sign of the Speaker's presence, and which is always put under the table when the Speaker leaves the chair. At one time, when a message from the Lords was announced, the Mace-bearer, bearing the mace, went to the Bar of the House, and met the Messenger, who came forward bowing, and retired in the same manner, with his face to the Speaker; for it would have been a terrible breach of etiquette had the Messenger favoured that illustrious personage with a glimpse of his back. When the Speaker leaves the chair, no one else occupies it. The House then goes into committee, and a chairman is appointed, who sits by the clerks at the table. On such occasions one of the forms of the House pertinaciously adhered to is often productive of good results. According to parliamentary rules, when the Speaker puts the motion that "I do now leave the chair," previously to going into committee, it is at the option of any member who has a question to ask, or a statement to make, or a grievance to proclaim, to move that the House do now adjourn, and then deliver himself of whatever he may wish to say; or he can make his statement as an amendment. Such forms are very valuable, though often very inconvenient to ministers who are anxious to get over the business of the country with as much expedition as possible, and give independent members an opportunity of uttering their sentiments, of exposing jobs, of being a terror to evil rulers, and a praise to them that do well. They often lead to very animated discussions. In such little skirmishes Lord Palmerston, the Bight Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, and Mr. Thomas Duncombe greatly shine. As a rule, you may in consequence hear better debates between half-past five and eight—the time when these little scenes may be expected—than at any other period of the evening, unless, in the small hours, the House is precipitated into an Irish row.

But time has passed away, and the more serious part of the evening's business is commenced. The benches on both sides of the House are already filled. That first row on the Speaker's right contains the ministers. Fronting them are the Opposition, always a formidable, and generally a useful band. If the Conservatives are in office, the Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli occupies the middle of the Treasury benches, supported on one side by the mild and respectable Sir John Pakington, and on the other by a figure fierce, and bearded, with a hook nose and a glittering eye like that of the Ancient Mariner, the great poet, novelist, and satirist of our day, Sir Bulwer Lytton. Lord Stanley, pale and studious-looking, is by; and around them are the gentle Walpole, the old party warrior, Fitzroy Kelly, and lesser lights. But undoubtedly the observed of all observers is the leader of the great Protectionist party, whose battles he has fought, whose councils he has guided, whose chiefs he has placed upon the Treasury bench. Up in the gallery no one is watched more keenly.

Lord Palmerston is the next best-stared-at man in the House; and next, that champion of the British constitution, Lord John. The Palmerstonians, whether in office or languishing on the bleak benches of opposition, are alike undistinguishable, for they have an official knack of pulling the hat over the eyebrow, so as completely to obscure the face, and from the gallery you can scarce tell one from the other, with the exception of Sir G. W. Hayter, who has always a mysterious air, and Wilson of the *Economist*, who rejoices in carroty, and consequently unlovely locks. On the same side of the House, but below the gangway, are the Irish ultras and tenant leaguers, a band once formidable; but Lucas dead, Duffy seeking on another arena the position

denied him here, Bowyer, bearded and red-haired, little better than the mouthpiece of Ultramontanism—that small party are little feared and little courted now. Below the gangway is the balance of power, where sit, on the first bench on the floor, on the right, Roebuck and Lord John Russell; the Manchester party (for, in spite of Manchester’s ignoble denial of the same, there is still a policy known as of Manchester) are close behind. The Peelites and the eccentricities sit on the other side. Bright and Gibson represent the Gracchi. What Gladstone and Sidney Herbert and Sir James Graham represent, it is hard to say; yet in that great assembly you shall not find three abler men.

But we have been already some time in the House. Hours have come and gone—day has faded into night. Suddenly, from the painted glass ceiling above, p. 14 a mellow light has streamed down upon us all. Rich velvet curtains have been drawn across the gorgeously painted windows, and if we had only good speeches to listen to, we should be very comfortable indeed. Alas, alas, there is no help for us! As soon as “Wishy” sits down, “Washy” gets up; and members thin off, leaving scarcely forty in the House. Nor can we wonder at this. Men must dine once in the twenty-four hours, and members of the House of Commons obey this universal law. Most of them have been hard at work all the day. It is no very pleasant life theirs, after all; crowded committee rooms all day, and the heated air of the House all night. An M.P. should have an iron frame as Joseph Hume had, or he cannot do his duty to his country or his constituents. Even we grow, as we sit in the gallery a few hours, weary as Mariana in the moated grange. Would that we were with the wife of our bosom at home! Would that we were listening to the child-like prattle and silver laugh of Rose! Would that we were discussing divine philosophy with a friend amidst a genial cloud of tobacco smoke! Would that we were anywhere—anywhere out of this! Sleep comes not when you want him. If you read, the gallery keeper is down on you in an instant; p. 15 and as to talking, that is quite out of the question. Hark! whose is that name the speaker announces? It is that of one of the leaders. What a change has come over the House! No more chatting and laughing of members on empty benches—no more idling of reporters—no more indifference in the strangers’ gallery. Even the divine voices of the women are hushed, and they stop to pay the homage beauty should ever love to pay to intellect and strength. What a grand sound is that cheer bursting from five hundred throats—for the house is hearty in its approval of a good speech, on whatever side it be delivered; and how telling is the reply, and how vehemently cheered—on one side at least; and how chaotic the confusion, and how discordant the sounds, when one of the smaller fry attempts to continue the debate which the House evidently considers has been sufficiently discussed, and respecting which it is now anxious to come to a vote! The helpless orator’s voice is lost in the clamour. After a few minutes’ purgatory he has sense enough to sit down, the Speaker reads the question, and puts it—the ayes have it, the noes demand a division—the bell rings—peers and diplomatists and distinguished strangers under the p. 16 gallery are turned out. Thanks to our insignificance we are suffered (though but recently has this been the case) to remain and see the ayes move in to the right and noes to the left. The House is emptied with the exception of the Speaker, the clerks, and the tellers. Immediately it begins to fill. After a little while all have come back. The tellers go to the bar, and thence in a row march up to the table, at which they are met by the clerk, to whom they give the result of the division. Already the House knows which side has won from the way in which the tellers are placed, the tellers of the victorious party being on the right side. And now the division is announced from the chair, the triumphant party cheer, and the House, if it be late, almost immediately adjourns. Out bound honourable M.P.’s as schoolboys out of school. Glad enough are they the thing is over; and, lighting their cigars—it is astonishing what smokers honourable gentlemen are—not unreluctantly do they go home. Following their example, we exchange the noisy and heated house for the chill and silent night. Yet, as we go, we cannot help observing, how generally well-behaved and patient the House has even been to unutterable bores. p. 17 It is seldom they put a man down, or are boisterous or rude. A man of no party easily gets a hearing; but he cannot secure attention. The House is polite, not cordial—civil, but not encouraging. Accordingly the multitude, the second and third-rate men—that is, all except a dozen—do not attempt to speak to the House at all, but to the gallery, and, through the press, to their constituents. If the speeches were not reported, they would, in most cases, be made shorter and better. For instance, your own representative Smithers made a speech. The weak-minded politicians of Rottenborough class Smithers as A 1; and when he tells them what a fire-eater he is in the House, and what things he says to government, they wonder Smithers has not been committed to the Tower for high treason by the base and brutal myrmidons of power. Now, what are the actual facts? While Smithers was speaking, the House very still—and perhaps, with the exception of an understrapper of the Treasury, enjoying a five minutes’ snooze, or deep in a statistical calculation, not a soul was on the government benches at all—nobody listened to Smithers; yet, on went Smithers stuttering incoherently, reading from his notes with fearful pauses between, screaming at the top of his voice, sawing the air with his arms in the manner of the unhappy Mr. p. 18 Frederick Peel, amidst universal indifference, save when occasionally a good-natured friend timidly called out, “Hear, hear.” The Speaker, perhaps, was chatting with an acquaintance about his next parliamentary levée; if Smithers had stood on his head, I almost question whether any one would have been aware of the fact; and Smithers sits down, as he rises, without any particular mark of approval at all. Why, then, does Smithers speak? Why, because the Press is there—to treasure up every word—to note down every sentence—to let the British nation see what Smithers said. This, of course, is a great temptation to Smithers to speak when there is no absolute necessity that Smithers should open his mouth at all. Yet this has its advantages—on the morrow honourable gentlemen have the whole debate before them, coolly to peruse and study; and if one grain of sense lurked in Smithers’ speech, the country gets the benefit. At times, also, were it not for the Press, it would be almost impossible to transact the business of the

country. For instance, we refer to Mr. Wilson’s proposals for Customs Reform. On the occasion p. 19 to which we refer, Mr. Wilson spoke for nearly four hours. Mr. Wilson we believe to be an excellent man, and father of a family, but he certainly is a very poor speaker. Never was there a duller and drearier speech. Few men could sit it out. In the gallery there were a few strong-minded females who heard every word—what cannot a strong-minded woman do?—but M.P.’s gossipped in the lobby—or dined—or smoked—or drank brandy-and-water—in short, did anything but listen to Mr. Wilson; and yet this was a grave, serious government measure. Why, then, did not members listen? Because there was no need for them to do so. The *Times* would give it them all the next morning; and so it mattered little how empty of listeners was the House, provided the reporters were there and did their duty. It is the same when the House legislates for our Imperial colonies, or our 150,000,000 in India. It is to the Reporters’ Gallery members speak, not to the House. Thus is it orators are so plentiful in spite of the freezing atmosphere. Ordinarily no one listens—no one expects to be convinced—no one seeks to convince. Said an old M.P., “I never knew a speech that influenced a vote.” As a rule, the M.P. was right. Orators like George p. 20 Thompson are quite out of place in it. Such a man as Henry Vincent would be a laughingstock. The House consists of middle-aged gentlemen of good parts and habits, and they like to do business and to be spoken to in a business-like way. Next to business-like speakers, the House likes joking. Hence it is Tom Duncombe and Lord Palmerston are such favourites. Hence it is that Colonel Sibthorp got and Henry Drummond gets so readily the ear of the House. The House cares little for declamation. It would rather be without it. It considers it a waste of time. Figures of arithmetic are far more popular than figures of speech. You must learn to speak to the House in its own style. Disraeli attempted to take the House by storm, and palpably failed. He altered his style. He learnt to talk figures, and became a success. More recently Mr. Warren attempted the same feat, and also failed. If you adopt the Parliamentary style, and have the requisite *physique*, whether you be Tory, Radical, Free-trader, or Protectionist—Protestant or Roman Catholic—Irish, Scotch, or English—whether you represent a borough or a county—you have a chance of being heard. The House of Commons, it is true, is a club, but it is not an p. 21 exclusive one. All classes are represented there. The Roman Catholic wolf reposes in it meekly by the side of the Protestant lamb. There you see, side by side, teetotal Crossley and Bass famed for bitter beer. Oxford sends there its trained and scholarly churchmanship, and the manufacturing towns their vigorous dissent. Lowness of birth is no obstacle to success. Lindsay was a cabin-boy; Fox, a weaver in Norwich in his youth; poor Brotherton, a factory lad; Ingram cleaned the shoes of one of his constituents; yet the House gives these men as ready a hearing as it awards to the inheritors of broad domains and the most illustrious of historic names. If the House is flunkeyfied, conventional, and illogical, it is the fault of the public—more flunkeyfied, conventional, and illogical—whom it represents. Waste not your honest indignation, but reserve it for the proper parties out of doors. Nor grumble that the working men have had no representative since their order was represented by the idiotic and self-seeking Feargus O’Connor, when you remember that, by means of the freehold land societies, almost any working men who like to go without beer might in a very short time acquire votes, and, combined, might p. 22 carry the counties. Aristocrats, you say, are in the People’s House. Yes, but they are men, most of them, of untainted honour—of lofty aim—of comprehensive views; and the general fusion and ventilation of opinion and clash of intellect elicit action most congenial with the intelligence of the age. Take any of the extreme men, for instance. What can they do? Are they the representatives of the mass of opinion? Is the country prepared to break up the National Church, as Mr. Miall would recommend—to dissolve the Union, as Gavan Duffy desired—to put down all our armaments, as Mr. Bright would think proper—to grant the five points of the Charter, as poor Feargus O’Connor contended? Most certainly not. Yet the representatives of such opinions are in the House, and rightly in the House. With them away, the opinions of the people would not be fairly represented. At the same time, it must be remembered, that such men represent but sections, and it is wisely arranged that the representatives of all sections shall meet. Thus justice is done to all. Thus mutual toleration is learned. Thus the mental vision of all becomes enlarged. We make these remarks because we think we see a tendency to run down the House of p. 23 Commons, and the representative institutions of which it is the type. By Britons this feeling should not be entertained. That assembly contains, it is true, not the grandest, but the best practical intellects of which our country can boast. In its earliest days it rocked the cradle of our liberties, and still it guards them, though the stripling has long become a giant. At our elections there is deep-seated demoralisation, but still that demoralisation has its bounds which it cannot pass, and the high-minded and the honourable form the majority in the House of Commons. At any rate, the representative body is quite as virtuous and intelligent as the constituency. If, gentle reader, it laughs at your favourite idea, it only does so because that idea is a poor squalling brat, not a goddess with celestial mien and air. A time may come when it may be that, and then it will not knock at the door of the House in vain. Till then, the House may be forgiven for not thinking of it. The House is not bound to take notice of it till then. Law Reform—Parliamentary Reform—Financial Reform—Customs Reform—Education—Colonies—Convicts— p. 24 India—these are the topics with which the House has now painfully to grapple. Your favourite idea must wait a little longer. In the meantime, if it be a good one let us wish it well—if it be a true one, we shall surely hear of it again.

A NIGHT WITH THE LORDS.

p. 25

Amongst the sights of London surely may be reckoned the Chamber of Peers—fallen from its high estate, but still existing as a potent institution in this self-governing country and democratic age. Of course it is usual to sneer at the peers—we all do so; and yet we would move heaven and earth to be seen walking arm in arm with a peer, no matter how old or vicious he be, on the sunny side of Pall Mall. We all say the peers must give way to the Commons; and yet we all know that half the latter are returned by the former, and that you can no more succeed in contesting a county against its lords and landlords, than you can hope to fly in the air, or to walk on the sea. Hear a pot-house orator on the House of Peers, you would think it the most indefensible establishment imaginable. But is it so? Ask Exeter Hall; that truly British institution is in raptures with the whole British peerage. A lord at a Bible meeting—a lord stammering a few unconnected p. 26 common-places about the propagation of Christianity in foreign parts, or the conversion of the Jews—a lord denouncing the Pope, or anticipating the coming of the millennium—is a sight dear to the British public. Sneer at the Lords as you will, expatiate on the manifest absurdity of supposing that they are wiser and better than other people, say, what every one knows and thinks, that you cannot transmit brains as you can the family spoons, and that therefore the idea involved in hereditary peerage is a lie; nevertheless, the House of Peers still continues a great fact. And it is a gorgeous fact as well. The apartments of the Commons are poor and mean compared with the chamber, all resplendent with crimson and gold, where the Lords meet. As you enter the central hall in the new Houses of Parliament, the passage to the right leads you to the Lords. We will suppose you have got an order—any peer can give you one; and as the House commences its sitting at five, and there is plenty of room in the gallery, you may take your time almost as freely as the celebrated Miss Lucy Long herself. Passing the lobby, you soon find your way into the house, the magnificent adorning of which will be sure to excite your utmost p. 27 admiration. Some may say it is too gaudy, everything pertaining to the chamber is so richly decorated; but it is very fine, and when Parliament is opened by Majesty in person, and the house is crowded with all the great men of our land, and the galleries blaze with beauty and diamonds, the effect must be, as it has always been described, imposing in the extreme. On ordinary evenings, however, nothing of this splendour is visible; the house has a deserted air; an assembly of a dozen or twenty is a very fair muster; a debate of a couple of hours is generally considered as unusually exciting and fierce. The best description of a debate in the Lords we have ever read is that by Disraeli, in the "Young Duke." We quote the passage:—"The Duke of St. James took the oaths and his seat. He was introduced by Lord Pompey. He heard a debate. We laugh at such a thing, especially in the Upper House; but on the whole the affair is imposing, especially if we take a part in it. Lord Exchamberlain thought the nation going on wrong, and he made a speech full of currency and constitution. Baron Deprivey Seal seconded him with great effect—brief, but bitter, satirical, and sore. The Earl of Quarterday answered these, full of confidence in the nation and in p. 28 himself. When the debate was getting heavy, Lord Snap jumped up to give them something light. The Lords do not encourage wit, and so are obliged to put up with pertness. But Viscount Memoir was very statesmanlike, and spouted a sort of universal history. Then there was Lord Ego, who vindicated his character when nobody knew he had one, and explained his motives because his auditors could not understand his acts. Then there was a maiden speech, so inaudible that it was doubted after all whether the young orator really did lose his virginity. In the end, up started the Premier, who, having nothing to say, was manly, and candid, and liberal; gave credit to his adversaries and took credit to himself, and then the motion was withdrawn. While all this was going on, some made a note, some made a bet, some consulted a book, some their ease, some yawned, a few slept. Yet, on the whole, there was an air about the assembly which can be witnessed in no other in Europe. Even the most indifferent looked as if he would come forward if the occasion should demand him, and the most imbecile as if he could serve his country if it required him."

p. 29 But let us look around us. We, the strangers, are up in a comfortable gallery at one end of a long, narrow, and rather dark chamber, along the sides of which are narrow windows of painted glass, and bronze statues of the barons of the olden time. In a smaller gallery, just beneath us, sit the parliamentary reporters. Exactly opposite us is the Throne; its splendour we but faintly perceive, for it is veiled from vulgar eyes; but there it is—the very spot where Majesty sits, while around her are principalities and powers,—there the royal assent is given to laws which affect the weal or woe of an empire—there, with silvery voice, and faultless delivery, and perfect pronunciation, are spoken royal speeches, greedily bought up in second editions of the morning papers, and flashed along the electric wires to all the great cities of our own and the capitals of other lands. At present a few peers are leaning against the rails and chatting—that is all. A little below the throne is the purple velvet cushion—the object of so many a struggle—of so many a year of unflinching toil—of so many a defence of party spoken in another place—of so many a clever piece of intrigue. We mean the woolsack, on which sits the Lord Chancellor Chelmsford. If the debate is continued till a late hour, and the keeper of her Majesty's conscience retires to dine, p. 30 Lord Redesdale acts as chairman *pro tem*. His lordship is eccentric in his dress—black trousers, white cravat, buff waistcoat, blue coat and brass buttons, white stockings and shoes, compose a *tout ensemble* rarely seen in the House of Lords or elsewhere. Greater men than Lord Chelmsford have sat on the woolsack. We live in a little age. Our great men are little men after all. Our Lord Chancellor has never done what other Lord Chancellors have done, viz., wielded the fierce democracy of the lower house, shone unrivalled on the parliamentary arena, thundered from the platform, won fame by their daring, and acumen, and learning, and eloquence, in every corner of the land. Indeed, he makes no pretensions to oratory or greatness of any kind. He is an able lawyer and eager partisan, little more. In this respect not at all resembling, or rather very much differing from, the extraordinary individual who has just darted on the woolsack, as if he would edge off the Chancellor and take his very seat. That individual we need not name; a

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glance at the nose and plaid trousers—trousers which he is incessantly hitching up when he speaks—are sufficient. It must be my Lord Brougham, and no one else. To no other man born of woman has nature vouchsafed the same power of universality. No other man would attempt to do what he is now doing, talking law with one man, politics with another, and scandal with a third, and all the while listening to the debate, and qualifying himself to take a part in it. In the course of time we shall see him pursuing an erratic career in any part of the house except in that one part in which sit ministers and their supporters. Amongst their ranks Lord Brougham is never to be found. To the party in power he is always opposed. It is his pride that he never worships the rising sun. The Ex-Chancellor has never forgotten or forgiven the treatment he received, but it does not affect his health—it does not tinge his life with melancholy. He does not let disappointment, like a worm in the bud, prey upon his damask cheek. His hair is a little greyer—his face is a little fatter; that is all the change the wear and tear of half a century of public life has produced: and of such a half century! the half century that waged war with France p. 32 —triumphed at Waterloo—carried Reform—repealed the Corn Laws—and saw the birth of railways and the electric telegraph; a half century of more interest than any preceding age—the work and the excitement of which wore out our Romillys, Follets, and Horners, with premature decay. Yet Brougham still lives. Slightly altering Byron, we may say of him,—

Time writes no wrinkles on his brazen brow,
Such as the *Edinburgh's* dawn beheld he wriggleth now.

Below the woolsack is a table, at which Lord Campbell generally sits; and on each side are ranged the orators and partizans of the two great sections which, under some name or other, always have existed and always will exist in our national history. The uninitiated call them Conservatives and Whigs; the wiser simply term them the men who are in office and the men who are not. The Government for the time being sits on the right hand of the Lord Chancellor, who acts as Speaker, and who has a far easier berth of it than Mr. Denison. The Lords are not long-winded, nor noisy; not passionate, and, like true Britons, always adjourn to dinner. Hence no post-prandial scenes are visible. In the small hours no patriots, smelling strongly of whisky-and-water and cigars, expatiate to a wearied assembly on that ever fertile theme, the wrongs and p. 33 woes of the Green Isle. The Lords, like Mr. Wordsworth's gods—

"Approve the depth but not the tumult of the soul."

We can never fancy the House of Lords to be what you may sometimes take the House of Commons to be—a bear garden or a menagerie. You miss the vulgarity of the one, and you also miss its excitement and earnestness—its cries of "question" and "divide" when some well-known bore is on his legs, and its long resounding cheers when some favourite partisan sits down. All is staid, and correct, and proper, with the exception of a tirade from the Rupert of debate, or some father in God on the Episcopal Bench. We would fain say a few words about these reverend gentlemen. One could hardly expect to find the ministers of the self-denying and lowly Jesus of Nazareth sitting in a gorgeous house with the proudest and wealthiest of the English peers. You would expect to find them rather by the bed-side of the sick, in the houses of the poor, combating with the vice and infidelity of the day; or else you would look for them in their studies, p. 34 surrounded with stately folios; or in the midst of their clergy, reviving the fainthearted, urging on the timid, counselling the young, and girding up the energies and hearts of all. You would expect to find them in the House of the Lord rather than in the House of Lords. In short, anywhere but in the turmoil of party conflict. This, however, is not the case. The bishops are almost the first object that attracts your eye. They sit on benches by themselves, on the Government side, but beyond the ministerial bench. In the "dim religious light" of the Upper House, you can scarcely make out what they are. You see venerable wigs, and black robes, and lawn sleeves; and if you look sharp, you may, at times, catch the outline of a reverend face—most probably of Dr. Tait, the energetic bishop of London, or of the pug nose and plebeian profile of Samuel of Oxford. They are very regular in their attendance, and frequently take part in the debate. Indeed, the latter bishop is a great man in the Lords; and so was Henry of Exeter, but his voice is seldom heard, and his name never mentioned now, though he is generally present, and sits at the end of the p. 35 benches nearest to the spectator, while the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is also pretty regular in his attendance, occupies the other end of the bench. The other bishops do not muster quite so strongly. Half of them is a good attendance. It is to be hoped they are more profitably employed.

Coming lower down, our eyes rest on the men who did carry on government, and generally occupy the unenviable situation of Ministers of the Crown. At present they are out of office, and are seated on the Lord Chancellor's left. Generally, at the top of the bench, is seated a slight, undersized, juvenile, red-haired Scot—that is the Duke of Argyle, who, in virtue of being a Duke, and the husband of the daughter of the Duchess of Sutherland, was Lord Privy Seal. His lordship is as pert and ready as any forward youth in a debating-club, and has much of the appearance and manner of such a one. He gives you no great idea of hereditary statesmanship, the only quality conspicuous in him being a tolerable amount of modest assurance, perfectly natural to a peer who is an author and has lectured at mechanics' institutions, and read papers before the British Association. By him is seated Lord Panmure, very red in the face, which redness seems to p. 36 arise from a military stock which he persists in wearing. There sits the Marquis of Clanricarde, who has suffered much from public opinion, and who deserves to suffer, if only his conduct in certain electioneering matters be taken into account. The Earl of Granville is the leader of this small band; he is a pleasant looking man, and speaks not badly for a lord. The Whig Nestor, the aged Marquis of Lansdowne, worthy of remembrance for his friendship for Tom Moore, is easily detected by his blue coat and brass buttons, that remnant of the palmy days of party. None of

these men are remarkable for oratorical power. A strong contrast is presented by the illustrious personage sitting on the next row, higher up, just opposite the bishops—a severe, well-made, heavy, grey-haired man, who sits almost silent and sullen, as if he had no feelings, as if the debate was a sham, and he should be glad if it were over. We refer to

> "The travelled thane, Athenian Aberdeen,"

the best-abused man, at one time, in her gracious Majesty's dominions, but without whom, nevertheless, it is questionable whether the Queen's Government could be carried on. Unfortunately, Lord Aberdeen is not the man for the public. The public likes to be gammoned, and his lordship cannot gammon. He is spare in words, cold and unimpassioned in delivery, and somewhat too indifferent to party attacks. On neighbouring benches are seated discontented Whigs, overlooked in the scramble for place, and who therefore view the proceedings of all governments with an impartial, but yet a jealous eye. Prominent amongst such is the sandy-looking unamiable Earl Grey, who seems angry with himself and all the world, because he is lame, and has not the command of the colonies. Below the table are half-a-dozen benches, on which congregate a few peers till dinner time. Here sits Earl Fitzwilliam—here also sits one of the most frightful bores in the House, Lord Monteagle, who always speaks, and, for a lord, cruelly long. That is the consequence of his having been in the Lower House. Never stop to hear him. As soon as you see his bald head, be off. The Dukes sit here. On the front bench on your right is the Duke of Cambridge. On his left is seated the Duke of Newcastle, a promising orator when a member of the Lower House, and a follower of Sir Robert Peel. Crossing to the government benches, the Earl of Derby fills the first place. We need not paint his portrait; the sharp aristocratic face—but feebly reflected in that promising young man, but unfortunate speaker, his son—is familiar to us all; there he is out of place. He has no fitting opponents. It was among the Commons that he won his laurels. Yet, at times, the old afflatus fills him, and his clear voice and fluent declamation are as bitter and terrible as when night after night he wrestled, as if for very life, with the brawny champion of Catholic Emancipation, and the somewhat too selfish, unscrupulous exponent of Irish wrongs. By his side is his trusty page, the inelegant and insipid Malmesbury, of whom, in a passing freak, the author of "Vivian Grey" not merely made a statesman, but actually Minister for Foreign Affairs. On the bench behind the Premier sits that wonderful old man eloquent, whose shrill tones may occasionally be heard, and whose intellect seems as great and grand as when he was Sir John Copley—Attorney-General before the Reform Bill was carried, and England, according to Croker, for ever undone. Near him sits a tall, thin gentleman, with a copious head of hair, and a force of gesticulation hardly English: that is the Earl of Ellenborough, in his own opinion hero, statesman, lawyer, "all things by turns, and nothing long;" in this respect second only to Lord Brougham, who sits everywhere, speaks wherever he can, and whose Ciceronian eloquence, aided by a delivery more expressive than dignified, by gestures and tones at any rate vivacious, astonish the weak nerves of the spectators, and oft-times puzzles the parliamentary reporters themselves. Few other notabilities do we see. Perhaps we may note on the opposition benches the pale aristocratic form of that popular nobleman, the Earl of Shaftesbury. Disraeli makes one of his peers say, the House of Lords looks like a house of butlers. We think the satirist is unjust. At any rate, the peers are well dressed. Hats, gloves, boots, and frock-coats are all unexceptionable. We need not say, in this respect, the House of Lords presents a very different appearance to the House of Commons. Yet the Lords need not be so particular about their "gorgeous array;" there are seldom more than half-a-dozen ladies present to admire and reward their display. The Lords are more polite than the Commons. Such ladies as are present take their seats in the gallery, where they can see and be seen; in the other house, as our readers know, the case is different. But even the ladies, we dare say, would not mind being treated as the Commons treat them, if the debates in the Lords were as good as in the Commons. If the peers did not dress so well, and were not so excessively polite, but spoke better, no great harm would be done; but there's the difficulty. It is difficult for a polite man to be ill-bred, and to lose his temper, and say sharp things. In the House of Commons nothing is easier. Say something bitter, and you will have a murmur of applause—be savage, and at any rate your own party will cheer; but in the Lords you can't get up the semblance of earnestness. The whole thing seems too much like play—an apology for business, and that is all. No man can speak to twenty sleepy peers as he could to four or five hundred eager partisans. No man can be impressive in the bosom of his family—and the Lords are a family party, all connected, or nearly so; and if a stranger comes in, he soon apes the fashionable tone, and becomes as dull and apathetic as the rest. And why should a lord be otherwise? A lord is not more a lord for having brains—nor the less a lord for being without. Intellect, skill, oratory, are no helps—are unnecessary in an hereditary institution. Sir Robert Peel knew this, and lived and died a commoner. Chatham became comparatively a small man when he took a pension and a peerage. So was it with Walpole, when meeting his old rival Pulteney, after they had both been raised to the peerage, he exclaimed, "Here we are, my lord, the two most insignificant personages in Europe." The Upper House but registers the decisions of the Lower—the business of the country is carried on elsewhere.

But while we have been looking at the House, the debate has closed. Lord Granville has asked a question and made an attack. Lord Derby has uttered a few petulant remarks, to which Lord Aberdeen has made a cold and formal reply, to which some peers, disappointed of place, have added a little independent criticism on their own account. Two or three exquisites have been discussing little matters of their own, till they find that if they stop much longer they will be too late for Rotten Row, and the House merely waits for Lord Monteagle to sit down and go home. Happily his lordship is briefer than his wont, and the Lord High Chancellor declares the House

adjourned. Rushing outside, we catch hasty glimpses of our hereditary legislators as they, in fashionable brougham or on splendid blood, start for their parks or respective Belgravian homes. We also, in more plebeian manner, do the same. We are sure the reader will have had enough of the Lords for one night. He will have found out that they are not much better orators or speakers than other men—that even lords stammer, utter incoherent remarks, display poverty of ideas. Let us add, in conclusion, the great merit of a night in the Lords is, that it is soon over. If the Lords be dull, at any rate they are short. To be dull and long-winded is an offence against good breeding of which few peers are guilty.

THE REPORTERS' GALLERY.

If it has ever been your lot, most magnanimous sir, to be in the neighbourhood of Westminster Hall about four any afternoon while Parliament is sitting, you must have observed more than one individual, with cheeks evidently "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," rushing into the door which leads to the Strangers' Gallery in the House of Commons. If, however, you look well, you will see that the parties referred to, instead of going the whole length of the passage, as you are compelled to do when occasionally you get an order, turn sharply to the left and climb a flight of narrow stairs. If you manage to follow them, you will find at the top of the stairs a small lobby, where three or four boys, in the livery of the Electric Telegraph Company, are waiting to receive the parliamentary report, which almost immediately after is flashing along the wires to our great hives of industry, of intelligence, and life, or to the capitals of other lands—to Paris—to Vienna—to Berlin. You turn to the left and enter a small room set apart for refreshments—three or four individuals are seated at table, one drinking Bass's far-famed ale, another feasting on juicy beef, another regaling himself with brandy-and-water, and another sipping the less stimulating and equally agreeable produce of the coffee plant. The happy fellows are poking their fun at each other in a mild and pleasant way, or possibly discussing the usual political topics of the day; others flit through the room with a celerity, as Mr. Squeers said of nature, easier imagined than described. Were they followed by gentlemen of Hebrew extraction, with those mysterious little slips of paper which contain letters of such magic power, they could not walk faster. As you listen, utterances of doubtful and dire import fall from their lips. "Palmerston is up," says one. You are alarmed; you think the bottle-holder is in a rage, and you tremble for the consequences. Again you hear, "Lord John is down;" you are distressed at the intelligence, the old champion of civil and religious liberty you hoped would long have been preserved from such a catastrophe. The gentlemen around you, however, listen to such statements with the coolness of stoics, paying little or no regard to such announcements. One says to another, "When are you on?" another demands of his friend, whether he is off; another says he comes on at nine. You are puzzled to know what manner of men you are amongst. They are not strangers fresh from the country—they have too pale and town-like a look for that; they are not members—because members feast in another part of the house. You will soon see what they are! you leave that room and enter another, in which are a few well-dressed personages transcribing hurriedly, as if for life. The truth flashes upon you. "These men are the reporters," you exclaim. For once, my good sir, you are right; and if you go through that glass-door you will find yourself in the Reporters' Gallery.

We will suppose that for this time only the doorkeeper has relaxed his usual vigilance, and you have managed to effect an entrance. There is as much difficulty in getting a stranger into the Reporters' Gallery as in getting Baron Rothschild into the House. As the gallery will not hold more than thirty, it is quite right this should be the case. On the back seats the reporters are sitting idle—some criticising the speakers in a manner anything but complimentary—some sleeping—some reading a quarterly; but on the front seat you see some dozen or thirteen, each in a little box to himself, busily engaged. If the speaker be a great gun, the reporter puts forward his utmost energies and takes down every word—if he be one of the illustrious obscure the task is less difficult, and a patient public is saved the painful duty of reading the *ipsissima verba* of Smith or Brown. Beside the reporter, in some cases, sits another gentleman, who has, comparatively speaking, an easier office to perform. He is the gentleman that does the parliamentary summary to which you instinctively turn, instead of wading through the eight or nine columns that give the debate itself. I believe the summary writer in the gallery remains all night, while the reporters take their turns, which last on an average half an hour. Thus, no sooner has a reporter been at his post for that time, than he leaves the house and rushes up to the office to copy out his notes; this may take him an hour. He then returns, and is ready to go on again when he is due. It would be utterly impossible for one man to report a debate and then to copy out his notes, and be in time for the paper of the next morning; consequently each paper is compelled to have a body of nine or ten parliamentary reporters, and these reporters, in order that they may all have an equal chance, vary their turns every week. Thus the man who goes on one week at four, goes the next at a later hour—and the reporter who is one week in the Commons, perhaps the next has the honour of sitting in the House of Lords. Otherwise the hard work might fall to a few, and the rest might take it very easy indeed.

As we don't happen to be reporting, we will look about us a little. We will report reporters as they are: on our left, just below us, is the reporter for the *Star*; next comes the *Daily Telegraph*, then the *Advertiser*, and then the *Daily News*. Three boxes are occupied by the *Times*: one for the reporters, one for the summary writer, and one for the manager of the *Times* parliamentary staff. On the other side are the *Chronicle* reporter and summary writer, the *Herald* ditto, and the

Post. Up to six o’clock in the evening the *Globe*, and the *Sun*, and the *Express* have each a parliamentary reporter present. The gallery is under the care of Lord Charles Russell, Sergeant-at-Arms, who is sadly put to it where to stow the gentlemen of the press, who have increased far p. 48 beyond the limits of the gallery. Behind the gallery are rooms in which some reporters write out their notes; and so hot and inconvenient are they, that his lordship has latterly acceded to the reporters a committee room attached for such as need it. Behind the gallery also is a refreshment room, and a policeman to keep out intruders. A few of the weekly papers have reporters in on Thursday and Friday nights, and these constitute the only habitués of the gallery. Of course the aspect of the house is different to what it is when viewed from the Strangers’ Gallery. You miss the Speaker and his ornamental chair and majestic wig, but you have a better view of the gangway and the bar—you see the Sergeant-at-Arms, wearing a sword, seated on his easy chair—that chair being made easy by the receipt of twelve hundred a year. You see the gallery under the Strangers’ Gallery in which peers, and members’ sons, and old M.P.’s occasionally sit; and now and then, through the glass door by which members enter, you see a bonnet, a bit of muslin—the lustre of some female eye—denoting that woman in her loveliness is taking note of the Conscript Fathers. This reminds us that the Reporters’ Gallery is just under p. 49 the little cage in which the British fair are confined during a debate. The consequence is to some of the reporters who wear moustaches, and cultivate the art of killing—who get themselves up in a very different style to your fathers of families—a Barmecide feast of the most cruel kind. They hear the murmur of female voices, not always “gentle and low”—they know that, shining like stars above them, are forms such as “might melt the saintship of an anchorite;” that above them are eyes more eloquent than the tongues below, but they cannot realise what they can imagine; and whilst music comes to them—

> “Like ocean which upon the moonlight shores
> Of lone Sigæum steals with murmuring noise,”

they must take down the common sense of common men; such is their cruel fate. And now one word about our companions. Most of them are young men—some are in their prime. None of them are old; old reporters are only met with where dead donkeys and departed postboys are common. At any rate they are not engaged on the morning papers: the late hours, the hard stretch of mind required in a reporter, don’t exactly suit old men. If you think reporting easy, my p. 50 good sir, you are most egregiously mistaken. It takes you two or three years to master shorthand sufficiently to assume your place as a reporter in the gallery. When you have done that, you will find that you don’t get your money for nothing, I can assure you. You must for half an hour take down all you can hear; you must then copy that out into long-hand and plain English as best you can. You must then come back into the house and take another turn, and so on, till the house is up; and then, worn and weary, you must again trudge to the office, and there indite the copy which, before the ink with which it is written is dry, is in the composing-room and in type. As this may detain you till four o’clock in the morning, you are then at liberty to retire to your bed, if it suit you, or to the flowers and early purl of Covent Garden, if it be summer time, and you are of a sentimental turn. Now, occasionally, it is all very well to sit up till three or four o’clock in the morning; London then is invested with a grandeur and stillness very impressive: the air is fresh and pure, bearing with it the odours of the country; the grand Cathedral of St. Paul looms proudly before you; the streets seem broader, longer than usual; and, far off, we catch glimpses p. 51 of Hampstead or of the Surrey hills; but when you have to see this, not once, but every morning, the case is altered, the spell is broken, and the charm is gone; and such a life must tell, sooner or later, upon the constitution. Reporters are not rosy, jolly men; they don’t look like Barry Cornwall’s happy squires,

> “With brains made clear
> By the irresistible strength of beer.”

Most of them live well, and are protected against the inclemencies of the weather. The reporters of the *Daily News* and *Times* come down in cabs, but they appear delicate hothouse plants; though, after all, they do not look worse than a popular M.P., such as Lord Dudley Stuart or Mr. Milner Gibson, at the end of a session. As a class, we have already hinted, the reporters are intellectual men; among them are many who have embraced literature as the noblest of all professions, and have as sacredly devoted themselves to it as, in old times, priests did to the service of their gods. You can tell these by their youthful flush and lofty foreheads. A time may come when the world may seduce them from the service, when all generous aspirations may fade away, when crushing selfishness shall make them common as other men. Then there are others p. 52 to whom reporting is a mere mechanical calling, and nothing else; who do their week’s work and take their week’s wages, and are satisfied; but most of the parliamentary reporters are clever men, and all aspire to that character. The mistake is one a little self-love will easily induce a man to make. Men of infinite wit and spirit have been in the gallery; therefore, the men in the gallery now are men of infinite wit and spirit. A gorgeous superiority over other men is thus tacitly assumed. You will hear of such a one, that he was a reporter on the *Times*, but he was not clever enough for that, and so they made him an M.P. But, after all, no man of great genius will report long if he can help it: reporting is a terrible drudgery. A man who can write his thoughts well will not willingly spend his time in copying out the thoughts of others. Dickens was a reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, but he, though his talent in that way was great, though he could perform almost unparalleled feats as a reporter, soon left the gallery. At one time Angus Reach was in the gallery; there, till recently, might have been seen that accomplished critic and delightful novelist Shirley Brooks. For a literary man reporting is a capital crutch: he is well paid, and it often leads p. 53

to something else. The *Times*' reporters are divided into three classes, none of whom get less than seven guineas a week. The other papers do not pay quite so well; but a literary man, if he be in earnest, can live on less than that till the day comes when the world owns him and he becomes great; and if his dream of fancied greatness be but a dream—if hope never realise the flattering tale she at one time told, still he has a means of respectable livelihood, and may rise from a reporter into an editor. Mr. James Grant, editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, was at one time reporter for that paper. In some cases the ambition of the reporter does not end quite so successfully. Only recently a reporter for one of the morning papers contested an Irish borough. Unfortunately, instead of being returned, the ambitious youth was thrown into gaol for an insignificant tavern bill of merely £250 for eleven days. What cruelty! What talent, what hope, what failure, have there not been in the Reporters' Gallery! And those who know it, if they wanted, could find abundance of material there with which

> "To point a moral or adorn a tale."

p. 54
Perhaps, after all, in nothing is the astonishing improvement made in these latter times so conspicuous as in our system of parliamentary reporting. The House was in terror when reporters first found their way into it. "Why, sir," said Mr. Winnington, addressing the Speaker, "you will have every word that is spoken here misrepresented by fellows who thrust themselves into our gallery. You will have the speeches of this House printed every day during your session, and we shall be looked upon as the most contemptible assembly on the face of the earth." In consequence of such attacks as these, the reporters became frightened, and gave the debates with the speakers disguised under Roman names, though nothing could be more wearisome than the small type of the political club, where Publicola talked against turnpike-gates and Tullus Hostilius declaimed on the horrors of drinking gin. Nor is it to be wondered at that the House grew angry when such reports as the following professed to be a faithful account of its proceedings: "Colonel Barré moved, that Jeremiah Weymouth, the d---n of this kingdom, is not a member of this House." Even when the reporters triumphed, the public were little benefited. p. 55 Nothing can be more tantalising than such statements as these, which we meet with in old parliamentary reports: "Mr. Sheridan now rose, and, during the space of five hours and forty minutes, commanded the admiration and attention of the House by an oration of almost unexampled excellence, uniting the most convincing closeness and accuracy of argument with the most luminous precision and perspicuity of language; and alternately giving force and energy to truth by solid and substantial reasoning, and enlightening the most extensive and involved subjects with the purest clearness of logic, and the brightest splendour of rhetoric." Sheridan's leader fared no better. "Mr. Fox," we are told, "was wonderfully pleasant on Lord Clive's joining the administration." Equal injustice is done to Mr. Burke. We read, "Mr. Burke turned, twisted, metamorphosed, and represented everything which the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had advanced, with so many ridiculous forms, that the House was kept in a continual roar of laughter." Again: "Mr. Burke enforced these beautiful and affecting statements by a variety of splendid and affecting passages from the Latin classics." It is no wonder, then, that a prejudice p. 56 should have existed against the reporters. On a motion made by Lord Stanhope, that the short-hand writers employed on the trial of Hastings be summoned to the bar of the House to read their minutes, Lord Loughborough is reported, in Lord Campbell's life of him, to have said, "God forbid that ever their lordships should call on the short-hand writers to publish their notes; for of all people, short-hand writers were ever the furthest from correctness, and there were no man's words they ever had that they again returned. They were in general ignorant, as acting mechanically and not by considering the antecedents, and by catching the sound and not the sense they perverted the sense of the speaker, and made him appear as ignorant as themselves." At a later period, the audacity and impudence of the reporters increased; loud and numerous were the complaints made against them. Mr. Wilberforce, who really deserved better treatment at their hands, read to the House, on one occasion, an extract from a newspaper, in which he was reported as having said, "Potatoes make men healthy, vigorous, and active; but what is still more in their favour, they make men tall; more especially was he led to say so as being rather under p. 57 the common size, and he must lament that his guardians had not fostered him upon that genial vegetable." Mr. Martin, of Galway, has immortalised himself by his complaint made about the same time, though based upon a less solid foundation than that of the great Abolitionist. The reporter having dashed his pen under some startling passages which had fallen from the Hibernian orator's lips, the printer was called to the bar. In defence he put in the report, containing the very words. "That may be," said Martin; "*but did I spake them in italics*?" Of course the printer was nonplussed by such a question, and the House was convulsed with laughter. Happily, this state of things no longer exists, and, in the language of Mr. Macaulay, it is now universally felt "that the gallery in which the reporters sit, has become a fourth estate of the realm." The publication of the debates, which seemed to the most liberal statesmen full of danger to the great safeguards of public liberty, is now regarded by many persons as a safeguard tantamount, and more than tantamount, to all the rest put together. "Give me," said Sheridan, whilst fighting the battle of the reporters on the floor of the House—"give me but the liberties of p. 58 the press, and I will give to the minister a venal House of Peers—I will give him a corrupt and servile House of Commons—I will give him the whole host of ministerial influence—I will give him all the power that place can confer upon him to purchase up submission and overawe resistance—and yet, armed with the liberties of the press, I will go forth to meet him undismayed; I will attack the mighty fabric he has raised with that mightier engine. I will shake down from its height corruption, and bury it beneath the ruins of the abuses it was meant to shelter."

The reporters have now a comfortable gallery to themselves—they have cushions as soft to sit

upon as those of M.P.’s—they have plenty of room to write in, and whilst they wait their turns they may indulge in criticism on high art or Chinese literature—on the divine melodies of Jenny Lind, or the merits of Mr. Cobden—a very favourite topic with reporters—or go to sleep. Mr. Jerdan, in his Memoirs, tells how different it was in his day; then the reporters had only access to the Strangers’ Gallery, and could only make sure of getting in there by being the first in the crowd that generally was collected previous to its being opened. But about the smart new gallery there are no associations on which memory cares to dwell. It was different under the late one; p. 59 old Sam Johnson sat there with his shabby black and unwieldy bulk, taking care to remember just enough of the debate to convince the public that “the Whig dogs,” to use his own expressive language, “had the worst of it.” We can fancy Cave, of the “Gentleman’s Magazine,” with a friend in the gallery, stealthily, for fear they should be detected and turned out, taking a few brief notes of the debate, and then, at the taproom of the nearest public-house, amidst the fumes of tobacco and beer, writing out as much as they could, which Guthrie then revised, and which afterwards appeared in the magazine under the head of “Debates in Great Lilliput.” Woodfall we see—the Woodfall of Junius—his pocket stuffed with cold, hard-boiled eggs—sitting out the livelong debate, and then writing out so much of it as his powerful memory retained—a task which often occupied him till noon the next day, but which gave the “Diary” a good sale, till Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*—Perry, the friend of Coleridge and of Moore—introduced the principle of the division of labour, and was thus enabled to get out the *Chronicle* long before Woodfall’s report appeared.

p. 60 We see rollicking roysterous reporters, full of wine and fun, committing all kinds of absurdity. For instance, one night the debate has been very heavy—at length a dead silence prevails, suddenly a voice is heard demanding a song from Mr. Speaker. If an angel had fallen from heaven, it is questionable whether a greater sensation could have been created. The House is in a roar. Poor Addington, the Speaker, is overwhelmed with indignation and amazement. Pitt can hardly keep his seat for laughing. Up into the gallery rushes the Sergeant-at-Arms to take the delinquent into custody. No one knows who he is—at any rate no one will tell. At length, as the officer gets impatient and angry, a hand is pointed to a fat placid Quaker without guile, seated in the middle of the crowd. Much to his amazement, on his devoted yet innocent person straightway rushes the Sergeant-at-Arms; and protesting, but in vain, the wearer of square-collar and broad-brim is borne off to gaol. The real delinquent is Mark Supple, a big-boned, loud-voiced, rollicking Irish blade—just such a man as we fancy M., of the *Daily News*, to be. Mark has been dining. He is a devoted follower of Bacchus; and, at this time, happens to be extraordinarily well primed. Hence his remarkable contribution, if not to the business, at any p. 61 rate to the amusement, of the evening. People call the present times fast; but men lived faster then. Sheridan drank brandy when he spoke. Pitt made one of his most brilliant speeches just after he had been vomiting from the quantity of port he had previously been drinking. Members, when they came into the House, not unfrequently saw two speakers where, in reality, there was but one; and the reporters were often in a state of similar bewilderment themselves: but they are gone, and the oratory they recorded has vanished from the senate. In the new gallery they can never hear what was heard in the old—the philosophy of Burke—the wit of Sheridan—the passionate attacks of Fox—or the cool replies of Pitt. The House has become less oratorical—less an imperial senate, more of a national “vestry.” It discusses fewer principles, and more railway bills. The age of Pitt and Fox went with Pitt and Fox. You cannot recall it—the age has altered. You find Pitt and Fox now in the newspaper office, not in the senate. The old gallery has looked down on great men. It could tell of an heroic race and of heroic deeds. It had seen the angry Charles. It had heard Cromwell bid the mace be gone. It had re-echoed the first indignant p. 62 accents of the elder Pitt. It had outlived a successful revolution. It had witnessed the triumph of reform. Can the new one witness more?

So much for the Reporters’ Gallery. We cannot take leave of the subject without remarking what obligations members are under to it. No man can long attend parliamentary debates without being very strongly impressed with that one great fact. The orators who are addressing empty benches and inattentive audiences are, in reality, speaking to the dozen reporters just before them. Colonel Sibthorpe, when he spoke, turned his face to them, in order that they might not miss a single word. You did not, the last time you were in the house, hear a single atom of Jones’s speech; you could merely see Jones, with an unhappy expression of face, and to the infinite annoyance of the House, waving his arms in an inelegant manner; yet how well Jones’s speech read in the *Times* the next day. Once upon a time a paper attempted to report literally what the members said—not what they should have said. They were threatened with so many actions for libel that they were all obliged to abandon the attempt; and now the reporters take p. 63 care that the speeches contain good grammar, if they do not contain good sense. Nor, most good-natured sir, are you under fewer obligations. It is owing to them that you read the debate over your muffins and coffee at your ease, in your morning gown and slippers, whilst otherwise you would have to remain in profound ignorance of it altogether, or would have to fight your way into the gallery as best you could, besides running a risk of catching cold or having your favourite corn trod on. Think, then, of the Reporters’ Gallery leniently. The brave fellows in it suffer much for you. Cowper makes the slave in the “Negro’s Complaint” exclaim—

> “Think ye, masters, iron-hearted,
>   Lolling at your jovial boards,
> Think how many backs have smarted
>   For the sweets your cane affords.”

A thinking public, at times, should reason in a similar manner. The reporters don’t find it all

play. People should remember—if a debate be dull to read—how terrible it must be to hear!

THE LOBBY OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DURING THE SESSION. p. 64

England, Ireland, Scotland, and our forty colonies are ruled, not from Downing-street, not from Privy Councils at Buckingham Palace, nor by the *Times* newspaper, as some pretend, nor even by the stump orator, but by the Lobby of the House of Commons. This I know, that if I were a member of the United Kingdom Alliance, and wished to root up the liquor traffic in England—that if I were a Scotchman, and endeavoured to confirm and extend the provisions of the Forbes Mackenzie Act—that even were I of the Green Isle, and raised the cry of justice for Ireland, whatever that may mean—I'd plant myself in the Lobby of the House of Commons, and there win victory or die.

Externally the Lobby is a handsome one; little more. Mr. Timbs tells me it is "a rich apartment, forty-five feet square, and has on each side an archway, carved open screens, inscribed *Domine* p. 65 *salvam fac Reginam*, and windows painted with the arms of parliamentary boroughs. The brass gas standards by Hardman are elaborately chased. The doorways lead to the library, the post-office, vote paper office, central hall, &c." Is this all? Yes, is the answer of one of the matter-of-fact class, of whom Peter Bell is such an illustrious example.

We are not all Peter Bells. We are of those who can read sermons in stones. We fancy for every why there is a wherefore. Wealthy men, and busy men, and great men, don't stand talking and grimacing for nothing; and when I catch one member in a corner with Brown I am not greenhorn enough to suppose that they are merely inquiring after each other's health, or commenting on the extraordinary mildness of the season, and its probable effect on the growth of cabbages. No, no, you may be certain that the Lobby of the House of Commons, where I have seen our greatest statesmen, our proudest peers, the nation's most illustrious guests, ambassadors, and princes, and wags, is not the place for small talk. Without studying "De Morgan on Probabilities" (a sin of which I am never likely to be guilty), you will not be far wrong if you come to the conclusion that p. 66 in the Lobby, somehow or other, between the hours 4 p.m. and 2 a.m., not a little business is settled more or less agreeable to all parties concerned. (Of course I am not referring to the young sprigs of nobility, who come into the House merely as an amusement, and without the slightest idea of the rights and duties of their class, and who are neither more nor less than a parody upon the representative system of which we are all so proud.) A few sentences will point to the significancy of the Lobby. Every member of the House of Commons passes through the Lobby. That is a given fact. Another is, that the Treasury Whipper-in affects the Lobby. Another is, that if you have anything to say to your member, or if he has anything to say to you, the Lobby is the place of rendezvous. These facts are suggestive. I am member for Bullock Smithy. I am not wealthy, and I have a large family. The Ministry are hard driven, one vote will save them. I meet their Whipper-in in the Lobby. We have a little chat. I give an honest vote, and virtue is rewarded by the appointment of my son to a place in the Circumlocution Office. "This is an exaggeration!" exclaims the general public. Let me then, give another case. I am member for p. 67 Bullock Smithy; I am rich, but I have no family, and I am a man of no birth. I'd give my ears, and my wife would not merely give them, but her diamond earrings as well, to see her name in the *Court Circular*, or to get a ticket to Lady Plantagenet's Sunday-evening parties. Promiscuously I hint this in the Lobby, and lo! the magician's wand waves, and I and my wife enter the stately portals we had long aspired to cross. If certain parties, in the course of the parliamentary session, find there is nothing lost by civility, where's the harm? But look round the Lobby; the electioneering agent is there to discuss how to make things pleasant; the getter-up of public companies comes there to catch a few M.P.'s as directors. There is the local deputation of the Stoke Gas Company—limited liability—whose Bill stand for reading a third time to-night; and there is the Secretary of the United Metropolitan Association for making every householder consume his own smoke. Smith from the provinces has caught his member's eye, and has got an order for the gallery. Alas, Smith, the gallery has been full this hour; and there are now fifty individuals, fortunate holders of orders like yourself, waiting their turn. Here is "Our Correspondent" gossiping with the door-keepers, attacking every member with whom he is on p. 68 speaking terms, in order that he may concoct the luminous epistles which form the attraction of the paper whose columns he adorns. This man is a spouter at public-house discussion clubs, and fancies himself, as he stands surrounded by M.P.'s, almost an M.P. himself. What does he here? I know not, except waste his time. A grand debate is coming on; a ministerial crisis is imminent. How full the Lobby gets; and how scrutinised is every action of hon. gentlemen as they take a turn, as they all do in the course of the evening, in the Lobby! There is the leader of the Opposition; he meets his bitterest foe, and bows to him and smiles. In what agony are the quidnuncs to know the hidden meaning of that bow and smile! The Ministerialist Whipper-in has a little book in his hand, and is busy in his calculation. By the twinkle in his eye I fancy it is all right; and now he may whistle "Begone, dull care, I prythee begone from me." He need not fear next quarter-day. Ah! that cheer which comes sounding to us through the glass doors denotes that the Premier has concluded his defence, and that the House is on his side. But out rushes the Sergeant-at-Arms. "Clear the Lobby for a division," exclaim the door-keepers. The police point p. 69 us the door: we take the hint while all the bells are tinkling, and all the members are rushing

from every quarter, through the Lobby to the House, as if members and bells were alike mad. We wait outside. By the clock nearly a half-hour is gone. Hark, what a cheer! By Jove! the division is taken, and the ministry are saved. It is midnight; yet the Lobby is full and gay. We won't go home yet. Just behind is the bar, and members are drinking pale ale and sherry, and soda with a little brandy in it, and the whole place begins to have the air of the London Tavern after an anniversary dinner on behalf of the Indignant Blind. Look at those swells just entering the House: evidently they have been dining out, and presently one of them will speak, and the whole House will be in a roar at his vinous oratory; out in the Lobby we catch faint echoes of the mirth. The House is in committee on the Cab Act, and are now enacting a clause relative to drunken and disorderly cabmen. Our friend is vehement, inconclusive, and indistinct. Happily the reporters will merely mention that he addressed the House amidst considerable laughter. As we leave the Lobby, we hear hints about "physician, heal thyself."

OUR LONDON CORRESPONDENT.

p. 70

Where's Eliza? Who was the man in the iron mask? Who was Junius? Whose were the bones discovered last year in a carpet-bag under Waterloo-bridge? You cannot tell. Neither can I tell you who is our London Correspondent. Yet he exists. I find traces of him in the most Bœotian districts of England.

> "Caledonia, stern and wild,
> Fit nurse for a poetic child,"

knows him. In "Tara's halls" he has superseded the harp, and is a presence and a power. Before newspapers were, when Addison was writing the "Spectator," and Dick Steele "Tatlers" innumerable, and De Foe his Review and all sorts of romances, in Grub-street there was an immense deal of activity in the way of letter writing. Country gentlemen wanted news, and were willing to pay for it. When there was a frost or when it was wet, when the nights were long or amusements few, when the squire was laid up with the gout or when my lady had the vapours, it p. 71 was pleasant to read who ate cheesecakes and syllabubs at Spring Gardens, who drank coffee at Button's or chocolate at the Cocoa Tree, what was the gossip of the October or Kit Kat clubs, what had become of Mrs. Bracegirdle, and how Mrs. Oldfield triumphed on the stage. Nor did the letter-writer stop here. In those days courtiers had two faces. There was one King *de facto*, and another *de jure divino*. There was a Court at St. Germains as well as at St. James's. There were Jacobites as well as Hanoverians. There were plots and intrigues—Popish and Protestant—and in the dark days before Christmas, in old country houses, letters full of all the rumours thus created were welcomed. But the age made progress. Newspapers were established in all the leading towns of the country, and the need of the letter-writer vanished, but only for a while. In his desire to cater for the public, and to outbid his competitors, the country newspaper revived the London correspondent, but on an extended scale. Now scarce a country newspaper exists that does not avail itself of his services.

p. 72 But from the general let me descend to the particular. I take up the "Little Pedlington Gazette," and I find our London Correspondent dates from --- Club, St. James's-square. Of course, in a free country, a man may date his letters where he likes; but I'll be bound to say the letter is written in a cheap coffee-house in Chancery-lane, and all its contents are culled from that day's papers. From the letter, however, I am led to suppose that the writer is a member of the House of Commons—that he has the run of the clubs—that royal personages are not unfamiliar with him—and that his intimacy with Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli is only equalled by his friendship with Palmerston and Russell. Our London Correspondent has very wonderful eyes, and I am sure his ears must be longer than those of any other animal extant. I have tried the Strangers' Gallery in the House of Commons, and the Speaker's, and the Reporters', and in all I have the utmost difficulty in distinguishing emotions which an animated debate must excite in the disputants. The Parliamentary fashion is for a minister, when attacked, to sit with his hat so pulled down over his eyes that you can scarce see a feature. Lord John always sits in this way, so does Lord Palmerston. Our London Correspondent can see what no one else can, and there is not a wince p. 73 of the galled jade but what is visible to his eyes. He sees Palmerston winking to Sir George Grey, and hears what Cornewall Lewis whispers to Lowe. Lord John does not chuckle quietly to himself, nor Disraeli whisper a sarcasm, nor Walpole meditate a joke, but he hears it. He possesses a rare and blessed gift of ubiquity. At the very time that he is watching these exalted personages in the House, he is chatting confidentially with Hayter in the lobby, or looking in at the Opera, or gossiping behind the scenes with Wright and Paul Bedford, or having a chop at the Garrick with Thackeray, or shining at Lady Plantagenet's soirée "as a bright particular star." I wonder the dear creature's head is not quite turned with the attentions he receives from the nobility, with whom he is as intimate as I with Smiths and Browns. Occasionally I meet with a few London Correspondents imbibing together their frugal half-and-half. It does me good to hear them. It reminds me of Elia's Captain Jackson's bacchanalian orgies, where "wine we had none, nor, except on very rare occasions, spirits; but the sensation of wine was there." Says one to another, "Oh, how did you get on last night?" "Pretty well," is the reply, "considering there were p. 74 none but lords there." Walking in a low neighbourhood, I meet one. I ask after his health. "Devilish seedy," says he; "up too late last night at Lady ---," naming one of the proudest members of the proudest aristocracies in the world. Yet are they too uncultivated, and hairy, and

outré, to pass with credit in Belgravia. Their literary efforts are not remarkable for polish. They affect a graphic style, and are not sparing in the use of slang. They eschew the classics, and evince but a very superficial knowledge of literature, save that of the current year. They are chiefly strong in politics, and for the actors on that stage have that contempt which familiarity is said to breed, but which, as in the present case, sometimes flourishes without it. They view the busy scene as the gods of Epicurus the follies of mankind. This man is a fool—that a tool. As a rule, officials are run down, and some illustrious-obscure—perhaps the borough representative, if he is on good terms with the paper—is suspiciously and inordinately puffed up. I often wish our London Correspondent would address the House. What a figure he would make on some matter of business, the details of which it is impossible to make interesting! The chances are that he is a Scotchman or an Irishman; that his impudence is merely confined to paper; that he does not shine either at the Temple Forum or Codgers' Hall. There would be a burst of laughter when he rose. They ought to be more genial critics. I was once in the lobby when our London Correspondent of a paper published in a large manufacturing town came up to me. I had not seen him for some years. After the usual inquiries, said he, "What a capital cutting that was in the --- of your book!" "You are mistaken," said I; "the book was by so and so." Our friend, very crest-fallen, immediately rushed off without bidding us goodbye. Once upon a time one of them produced a great sensation. Our readers will remember, when Lord John Russell dismissed Lord Palmerston, what a cry was raised about German influences by a certain morning print which seems to exist merely for the sake of disgusting intelligent people with a righteous cause. A German paper was referred to. Well, the gentleman to whom I have alluded was the correspondent of that paper, and one day, in the absence of anything of importance, he had manufactured the article very innocently out of the extraordinary paragraphs in which the morning print aforesaid rejoices, little dreaming, that in Parliament and out his letter would be quoted as evidence of a deeply-laid conspiracy to weaken the power of Lord Palmerston and undermine European liberty.

But I have not yet said who our London Correspondent is. The better class of them I think are Parliamentary reporters. There was a paper published in London kept alive merely by its Paris Correspondent. No other paper had such a correspondent, or abounded in such extraordinary tales and scandal. Yet the correspondent's plan was very simple. Every new tale and drama which came out in Paris was worked up and sent to London as a reality, that was all. In a less degree our London Correspondent does the same, and in quiet country towns there is great wonder and lifting up of hands, especially if, as was once the case, the wrong letter is sent, and the Tory paper abounds with sneers at Lord Derby and the squirearchy, a *contretemps* which is avoided if the plan of one London Correspondent be adopted, who supplies thirteen different papers with the same letter at five shillings each—a plan, however, not sanctioned by respectable papers, who pay a good price and get often a good article, and for whose letters, if a little too highly coloured and seasoned, the public taste is more to blame than the newspaper proprietor, or his painstaking London Correspondent. I believe *the* Mr. Russell, of the *Times*, was the London Correspondent of one of the Irish papers, and such papers as the *Liverpool Albion*, *Cambridge Independent*, and a few others I could name, evidently have for London Correspondents literary men of superior position and respectability.

A SUNDAY AT THE OBELISK.

The ancient Athenians were a restless, inquisitive people. At the Areopagus it was that Paul preached of an unknown God. Their popular assemblies met on the Pynx. There mob orators decreed the ostracism of Aristides the Just, and the death of Socrates the Good. In the metropolis we have no Pynx where our *demoi* are wont to assemble, but we have several spots that serve for popular gatherings on the Sunday—our working-man's holiday. One of these is the Obelisk at the Surrey end of the Blackfriars-road. The district I allude to is what is called a low neighbourhood. If I am to believe a popular poet, it was there that the Ratcatcher's daughter lived; and I should imagine, from the seedy, poverty-struck appearance of the place, that her papa's avocation was not so highly remunerative as some other professions, or he would have pitched his tent, *alias* become a ten-pound householder, in a more fashionable quarter.

May I attempt a description of the neighbourhood? Circumstances compelled me to be there one Sunday, just as Sabbath bells were ringing for divine service, and the streets were crowded with hungering worshippers. Newman Hall's place of worship was full, as was St. John's Episcopal Chapel, and there was between them a Methodist Assembly, which was by no means scanty; yet all round me there were crowds to whom Sunday was no Sunday in a religious sense, to whom it was a mere day of animal rest, who were yet pale and heavy with the previous night's gin and beer. What were they about? Well, from the Surrey Theatre, all placarded with yellow bills of "The Wife's Revenge," to the Elephant and Castle, there was a busy traffic going on, far busier, I should imagine, than on any other morning of the week. Happily the public-houses were shut up, but as I passed the coffee-houses were full of working-men reading newspapers, and an easy shaving shop (I write so from the placard on the door, not from actual experience) seemed doing a tremendous trade. Such shops as were open, and they were numerous, were very full, and opposite such as were shut up, what rows of barrows and costermongers' carts there were, with all the luxuries of the season, such as Spanish onions, carrots, cabbages, apples and pears, chestnuts, sweetmeats! Did you want your likeness taken, there were artists to do it at sixpence

a head. Did you need to buy old clothes, there were Hebrew maidens waiting to sell you them to any amount. One old lady was doing a thriving business in what she denominated as “spiced elder.” Boot-cleaning, though not by Lord Shaftesbury’s boys, was being carried on upon a gigantic scale. Two or three vendors of cheap prints, chiefly fancy subjects—portraits of imaginary females with very red cheeks and large eyes, and gay dresses—collected a great crowd, but I fear one consisting chiefly of admirers rather than purchasers. It may be that the tightness of the money market was felt in the Blackfriars-road, and that the lieges of that district felt that, with the Bank charging even two-and-a-half per cent., something better might be done with the money than investing it in works of art. The butchers’ stalls were well attended, though I regret to say, from casual remarks dropped as I passed by, the keepers of rival establishments were not on such friendly terms as are desirable amongst near neighbours. Women were p. 81 bringing their husbands’ dinners, children were flocking about in shoals, and sots were yawning, and smoking, and gossiping, waiting for one o’clock and their beer. You ask, was no effort made to get this mass under the influence of religious teaching? Oh, yes; all the morning there was service of some kind of other at the Obelisk. As soon as one man had finished, another had commenced; and at times one man was preaching on one side and another on another. The first man I heard evidently was a working-man; and if to preach all that is required were fluency and a loud voice, evidently he would have done an immense amount of good: but he was too fluent to be clear and correct. I question whether a working-man is a good preacher to a working-man. The chances are, he imitates the worst characteristics of some favourite preacher, instead of translating Bible truth into plain every-day language. My friend had got all the stereotyped phrases, such as the “natural man,” &c., which can only be understood by persons accustomed to religious society, and therefore I did not wonder when I found he had but some twenty or thirty to hear him. To him succeeded, I regret to say, two men in seedy black, with dirty white chokers, p. 82 and cadaverous faces, whose portraits were I to give, you would tell me I was drawing a caricature. I don’t doubt but what they were most respectable, well-meaning men; but I do think it is a mistake to send such out into the highways and byways. The men who go there should be of an engaging aspect, as in the crowd that pass by you may depend upon it there are but too many disposed to sneer at and ridicule religion even when it is placed before them in the most attractive form. How they got on I cannot tell, as just at that time a host of men very earnest in discussion attracted my attention. A teetotaller was hard at work, not repeating a set of phrases parrot-like which he had learnt by heart, but discussing teetotalism with a crowd evidently well ready to go into the whole subject. Short and sharp question and answer were flying fast, and all seemed very good tempered. I don’t know whether my friend succeeded in getting any to sign the pledge, but I could see that he had more success than the preachers, who seemed to me to make no impression whatever. We may depend upon it these discussions are better than speeches or lectures; they require, perhaps, greater gifts, but they will be found to yield a richer p. 83 harvest. It is in the streets we find the victims, and in the streets we must seek to save them. You would not get these loungers round the Obelisk to take the trouble to come to a temperance lecture, but they, well fortified in their prejudices as established truths, were not unwilling to engage in a discussion in which they found themselves worsted. The temperance orator had an advantage over the divine. The latter could only speak of a future joy or sorrow, the former could tell the sot how much better he would have been, how much fresher he would have felt, how much more money he would have had in his pocket, if he had kept sober last night; and there stood the sot, all dirty and stupid, yet repentant, and half influenced by the orator to become a sober man himself. Such teaching is good in such places; but the speakers must be prepared to rough it—to give and take, to be ready in repartee, to be abundant in anecdote and illustration. They must have pliant tongues and good voices, or they may find their congregation moving off to listen to a social orator over the way; or, what is worse still, remaining to confute, and jeer, and laugh.

EXETER HALL.

p. 84

Lord Macaulay has made all the world familiar with the bray of Exeter Hall. Exeter Hall, when it does bray, does so to some purpose. It is in vain fighting Exeter Hall. It is the parliament of the middle classes. It has an influence for good or bad no legislator can overlook—to which often the assembly in St. Stephen’s is compelled to bow. I have seen a Prince Consort presiding at a public meeting in Exeter Hall; on its platform I have heard our greatest orators and statesmen declaim. In England who can over estimate the influence of woman? and in Exeter Hall, in the season, nine benches out of ten are filled with women. The oratory of Exeter Hall is not parliamentary. A man may shine before a legal tribunal—may shine on the floor of the House of Commons—may be great among the Lords—and yet utterly fail in Exeter Hall. He may even be a popular preacher, and yet not move the masses that crowd the Strand, when a public meeting, chiefly religious, p. 85 occasionally philanthropic, never political, is being held.

On your right-hand side, as you pass along the Strand, you see a lofty door, evidently leading to some immense building within. It is called Exeter Hall, for it stands where in old times stood Exeter Change, and still has its live lions, which are very numerous, especially in the months of May and June. You enter the door and ascend a long and ample staircase, which conducts you to one of the finest public rooms in the metropolis. What popular passions have I not seen here! What contradictory utterances have I not heard here! High Church—Low Church—Methodism—

Dissent—have all appealed from that platform to those benches crowded with living souls. From that platform, accompanying that organ, seven hundred voices join often in Handel's majestic strains. Underneath me are the offices of the various societies whose aims are among the noblest that can be proposed to man. Westminster Hall is a fine hall, but this in which I am is eight feet wider than that—131 feet long, 76 feet wide, and 45 feet high, and will contain with comfort more than 3,000 persons. On the night of which I now write it was well filled by an audience, p. 86 such as a few years back could not have been collected for love or money, but which now can be got together with the greatest ease, not merely in London, but in Manchester, in Birmingham, in Liverpool, in all our great seats of industry, of intelligence, and life. I mean an audience of men and women who have come to see intemperance to be the great curse of this our age and land, and who have resolved to abstain themselves from all intoxicating drink, and to encourage others to do so as well. Evidently something great was expected. The western gallery was covered with tastefully-decorated cloth, on which was inscribed, in emblazoned silver letters, thirty inches deep, "The London Temperance League," with an elaborate painted border, composed of garlands of flowers. The royal gallery, and the smaller one opposite, was covered with scarlet cloth, on which were arranged rose-coloured panels, with the words, "London Temperance League," in silver letters. The front of the platform and the reporters' box was also decorated in a similar manner. At the end of the royal gallery was fixed a large royal standard, the folds of which hung gracefully over the heads of the audience. Under the royal standard was placed the p. 87 union-jack. At the end of the opposite gallery proudly waved the banner of the great Republic of the West. The platform was decorated with flags, bearing inscriptions of various kinds. Like the stars in the heavens, or the sands on the sea shore, they were innumerable. In front of the organ were arranged the choir of the Temperance Societies, and on the floor of the platform were placed the Shapcott family, with their Sax-horns.

Why was all this preparation made? For what purpose that living multitude of warm hearts? The answer is soon given. Some twenty-four years back a poor lad, without money and learning—almost without friends—was shipped off to America, to try his fortune in the New World. Arrived there, the lad became a man, lived by the sweat of his brow, learned to drink, to be a boon companion, and fell as most fall; for there is that in the flowing bowl and the wine when it is red, which few can withstand. Friends left him; he became an outcast and a wanderer; he sank lower and lower; he walked in rags; he loathed life; his frame became emaciated with disease; there was none to pity or to save. It seemed for that man there was nothing left but to lie down and p. 88 die. However, whilst there is life there is hope. That man, in his degradation and despair, was reached; he signed the Temperance pledge; he became an advocate of the Temperance cause. His words were words of power; they touched men's hearts, they fired men's souls. He led the life of an apostle; wherever he went the drunkard was reclaimed; zeal was excited, the spell of the sparkling cup was gone, humanity was saved, and now he had returned for awhile to his native land to advocate the cause which had been a salvation to his own soul and life, and these men and women—these hopeful youths—these tender-hearted maidens—have come to give him welcome. Already every eye in that vast assembly is turned to the quarter whence it is expected the hero of the night will appear. At length the appointed hour arrives, a band of Temperance reformers move towards the platform, with the flags of Britain and America waving, as we trust they may long do, harmoniously together. Familiar faces are seen—Cruikshank—Buckingham—Cassell; but there is one form, apparently a stranger; it is John B. Gough. A few words from Mr. Buckingham, who presides, and the stranger comes forward; but he is no stranger, for the British p. 89 greeting, that almost deafens his ears, while it opens his heart, makes him feel himself at once at home.

Well, popular enthusiasm has toned down—the audience has reseated itself—a song of welcome has been sung, and there stands up a man of middle size and middle age. Lord Bacon deemed himself ancient when he was thirty-one—we moderns, in our excessive self-love, delude each other into the belief that we are middle-aged when we are anywhere between forty and sixty. In reality, a middle-aged man should be somewhere about thirty-five, and such we take to be Mr. Gough's age. He is dressed in sober black—his hair is dark, and so is his face; but there is a muscular vigour in his frame for which we were not prepared. We should judge Gough has a large share of the true *elixir vitæ*—animal spirits. His voice is one of great power and pathos, and he speaks without an effort. The first sentence, as it falls gently and easily from his lips, tells us that Gough has that true oratorical power which neither money, nor industry, nor persevering study, can ever win. Like the poet, the orator must be born. You may take a man six feet high; p. 90 he shall be good-looking, have a good voice, and speak English with a correct pronunciation—you shall write for that man a splendid speech—you shall have him taught elocution by Mr. Webster, and yet you shall no more make that man an orator than, to use a homely phrase, you can make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Gough is an orator born. Pope tells us he "lisped in numbers," and in his boyhood Gough must have had the true tones of the orator on his tongue. There was no effort—no fluster—all was easy and natural. He was speaking for the first time to a public meeting in his native land—speaking to thousands who had come with the highest expectations—who expected much and required much—speaking, by means of the press, to the whole British public. Under such circumstances, occasional nervousness would have been pardonable; but, from the first, Gough was perfectly self-possessed. There are some men who have prodigious advantages on account of appearance alone. We think it was Fox who said it was impossible for any one to be as wise as Thurlow looked. The great Lord Chatham was particularly favoured by nature in this respect. In our own time—in the case of Lord Denman—we have seen how much p. 91 can be done by means of a portly presence and a stately air. Gough has nothing of this. He is just as plain a personage as George Dawson of Birmingham would be if he were to cut his hair

and shave off his moustache; but, though we have named George Dawson, Gough does not speak like him, or any other living man. Gough is no servile copy, but a real original. We have no one in England we can compare him to. Our popular lecturers, such as George Dawson, Henry Vincent, George Thompson, are very different men. They have all a studied quaintness or a studied rhetoric. There is something artificial about them all. In Gough there is nothing of this. He seems to speak by inspiration. As the apostles spoke who were commanded not to think beforehand what they should say—the spoken word seems to come naturally, as air bubbles up from the bottom of the well. In what he said there was nothing new—there could be nothing new—the tale he told was old as the hills; yet, as he spoke, an immense audience grew hushed and still, and hearts were melted, and tears glistened in female eyes, and that great human mass became knit together by a common spell. Disraeli says, Sir Robert Peel played upon the House of Commons as an old fiddle; Gough did the same at Exeter Hall. At his bidding, stern, strong men, p. 92 as well as sensitive women, wept or laughed—they swelled with indignation or desire. Of the various chords of human passions he was master. At times he became roused, and we thought how

> “In his ire Olympian Pericles
> Thundered and lightened, and all Hellas shook.”

At other times, in his delineation of American manners, he proved himself almost an equal to Selsbee. Off the stage we have nowhere seen a better mimic than Gough, and this must give him great power, especially in circles where the stage is as much a *terra incognita* as Utopia, or the Island of Laputa itself. We have always thought that a fine figure of Byron, where he tells us that he laid his hand upon the ocean’s mane. Something of the same kind might be said to be applicable to Mr. Gough. He seemed to ride upon the audience—to have mastered it completely to his will. He seemed to bestride it as we could imagine Alexander bestriding his Bucephalus. Since then Mr. Gough has spoken in Exeter Hall nearly seventy times—has endured cruel misrepresentations—yet his attractions are as great, and his audiences as overflowing as over. p. 93 The truth is, in his strength and weakness Gough is the very personification of an Exeter Hall orator. You may object to his exaggerations—you may find fault with his digressions—you may pooh-pooh his arguments—you may question the good taste of some of his allusions—you may wonder how people can applaud, and laugh at, or weep over, what they have applauded, or laughed at, or wept over a dozen times before: but they do; that no one can deny.

Gough spoke for nearly two hours. Evidently the audience could have listened, had he gone on, till midnight. We often hear that the age of oratory has gone by—that the press supersedes the tongue—that the appeal must henceforth be made to the reader in his study, not to the hearer in the crowded hall. There is much truth in that. Nevertheless, the true orator will always please his audience, and true oratory will never die. The world will always respond to it. The human heart will always leap up to it. The finest efforts of the orator have been amongst civilised audiences. It was a cultivated audience before whom Demosthenes pleaded; p. 94 to whom, standing on Mars-hill, Paul preached of an unknown God. The true orator, like the true poet, speaks to all. He gathers around him earth’s proudest as well as poorest intellects. Notwithstanding, then, the march of mind, oratory may win her triumphs still. So long as the heart is true to its old instinct—so long as it can pity, or love, or hate, or fear, it will be moved by the orator, if he can but pity or love, or hate or fear himself. This is the true secret. This is it that made Gough the giant that he is. Without that he might be polished, learned, master of all human lore; but he would be feeble and impotent as the

> “Lorn lyre that ne’er hath spoken
> Since the sad day its master chord was broken.”

THE DERBY.

p. 95

Is there a finer sight in creation than a horse? I don’t speak of the wild horse of the prairie, as seen at Astley’s—nor of the wearied animal by means of which the enterprising greengrocer transports his wares from Covent-Garden to the Edgware-road—nor of the useful but commonplace looking cob on which Jones trusts himself timidly as he ventures on a constitutional ride, while his groom, much better mounted, follows scornfully behind—nor of the broken-down, broken-knee’d, spavined, blind roarer, all the summer of whose life has been passed in dreary drudgery, and for whom nought remains but the knacker’s yard, and the cold calculations of the itinerant vendors of cat’s-meat; but of a horse such as a monarch might pet, and the very queen of beauty might deign to ride—a horse such as Gamarra.

> “A noble steed,
> Strong, black, and of the desert breed,
> Full of fire and full of bone,
> All his line of fathers known,
> Fine his nose, his nostrils thin,
> But blown abroad by the pride within.”

And who that has ever laid his leg across such, and bounded along the turf, does not feel that the p. 96

bare memory of it is a joy for ever, thrilling almost as Love’s young dream? Such was our good fortune once; now we creep into town on the top of a ’bus, and our hair is grey, and our pluck is gone, and our heart no larger than a pin’s head.

To write about London, and to omit all mention of the Derby, were unpardonable. At the Royal Academy Exhibition this year, the rush to see Mr. Frith’s picture of the Derby was so great that a policeman was required to keep off the crowd. Horse-racing is the natural result of horse-riding. It is essentially the English sport. Taking Wetherby’s Calendar as our guide, we may calculate that in 1855 there were 144 meetings in Great Britain and Ireland, which were attended by 1606 horses, of whom only 680 were winners, fed by £60,000 of added money inclusive of the value of cups and whips, and diffusing £198,000 in added money and stakes more or less. If there were no light weights to ride, and no noblemen or wealthy commoners to run their horses, the horses [p. 97] would run of their own accord. There are horses, as there are men, who never will play second fiddle if they can possibly avoid it; and if horses run, men will look and admire, and the natural result is the Derby Day. A grander sight of its kind is perhaps hardly to be seen. For twelve months have the public been preparing for the event. For twelve months has the sporting and the betting world been on the *qui vive*. We do not bet, for we hold that the custom is absurd in a rich man, and wicked in one who is not so; but in every street in London, in every town in England, in many a quiet village, at the beer-shop, or the gin-palace, or the public-house, bets have been made, and thousands and thousands of pounds are depending on the event. As the time draws nigh the excitement increases. Had you looked in at Tattersall’s on the previous Sunday, you would have seen the betting of our West End swells and M.P.’s who legislate for the observance of the Sabbath, and who punish poor men for keeping betting-houses—fast and furious. On the previous night of the day when the Derby is run a motley population encamp on the Downs. There are booths where there are to be dancing, and drinking, and eating, and [p. 98] gambling. There are gipsies who are to tell fortunes, and acrobats who are to exhibit a most astonishing flexibility of muscle. There are organs, and singing girls, and a whole legion of scamps, who will pick pockets, or play French put, or toss you for a bottle of stout, or offer their book and a pencil to betters; and as the dim grey of morning brightens into day, their number increases in a most marvellous manner. On they come—ricketty carts laden with ginger beer—men with long barrows and short pipes, who have walked all the way from town, long trains of gigs and hansoms, and drags, and carriages, and ’busses, and pleasure vans, laden with pleasure seekers, determined to have a holiday. The trains bring down some thirty or forty thousand human souls, the road is blocked up and almost impassable. Many a party, who left town in good spirits, have come to grief. Here a wheel has come off. There the springs have broken. Here the dumb brute has refused to drag his heavy burden any further. There the team have been restive or the charioteer unskilful, and the coach has been upset. In a session in which unusually little business has been done, in the very midst of a ministerial crisis, parliament has adjourned, and senators, commoners, and lords, are everywhere around. That man with spectacles and long [p. 99] black stock, driving a younger son past us, is England’s premier, whose horse is the favourite—who has never yet won the Derby—who, it is said, would rather do so than have a parliamentary success—and who, it is also said, has offered his jockey £50 a-year for life should he win this race. That fat, greyhaired man is the Duke of Malakoff. Here is the Royal Duke, who is treading in his father’s steps, and will be wept by a future generation as the good duke and hero of a thousand City feeds. Let us look about us while the bell is ringing and the police are clearing the course. The Grand Stand alone holds some thousands. Then, as you look from it for a mile on each side, what a cluster of human heads! and behind, what an array of carriages and vehicles of all kinds! A most furious attack is evidently being made on the commissariat. The more dashing have baskets, labelled “Fortnum and Mason,” and it is clear that the liquids are stronger than tea. Be thankful those are not ladies, dressed elegantly though they be, who have drank so much champagne that their tongues are going rather faster than is necessary. You do not see many ladies; and the girls so gay, what is their gaiety?—is it truer than their complexions? Very [p. 100] beautiful at a distance, if you do not go close and see the rouge and pearl powder. But to-day is a holiday. Many here know nothing about a horse, care little about one; but they have come out for a day’s fresh air and for a pic-nic. They could not have had a finer day or chosen a better spot. The down itself, with its fresh green velvet turf, is delicious to tread: and as you look around, what a magnificent panorama meets your eye, fringed by waving woods and chestnut trees, heavy with their annual bloom! Then there are the horses taking their preliminary canter. What eager eyes are on them! How anxious are the betters now, making up their final books! At the corner, in the carriages, on the hill, or along the course, how brisk is the speculation. “Which is Tox?” “Is that Physician?” “Where’s Beadsman?” are the questions in every mouth. And one does not like this horse’s fore legs, or that horse’s hind ones. And criticisms of all kinds are hazarded. At length some twenty horses are got together at the post. “They’re off!” is the cry wafted across the plain. Up the hill they go. On the top they’re scarce visible. As they turn the corner they [p. 101] look like so many rats. And now, amidst a whirlwind of shouting and hurrahing, the race is over; and in two minutes and fifty-four seconds Sir Joseph Hawley, a Whig baronet, beats Lord Derby, the Conservative Premier, clears £50,000, while his jockey, for that short ride, earns as much as you or me, my good sir, may win by the labour of many a long year. Pigeons fly off with the result. The telegraph is at work. At the *Sunday Times* office, about four o’clock, the crowd is so great that you can scarce get along the street, and many a man goes home with a heavy heart, for some are hit very hard. “This is a bad day for all of us,” says one to me, with a very long face. “I have lost £150,” says another, and he does not look like a man who could afford to lose that sum, and the crowd disperses—some exultant—some despairing—all of them in a reckless mood, and ready for dissipation. The longer we stop now, the sadder shall we become. Go to Kennington-common, if you wish to see the moral effects of the Derby. Drop in at the places of gay resort at

the West-end in the course of the night. Go in a little while after to Bow-street, or Portugal-street. p. 102 For many a day will families mourn a visit to the Derby. I never saw so many wives, evidently belonging to decent tradesmen, so intoxicated as I saw on the last Derby. In the train but little intoxication was visible, but the coming home was the dark side—a side which the admirers of what they call our national sports are too ready to overlook, and which even Mr. Frith has failed to paint.

The eloquent Montalembert sees in a Derby day what Virgil has described in the fifth Æneid. The Frenchman is too complimentary, it is true.

> "Undique conveniunt Teucri mixtique Sicani."

But pious Æneas sanctioned no such reckless revelry as too often is visible on the Epsom downs. Lord Palmerston compares the Derby to the Isthmian games; but as they were celebrated once in ten years, and were in honour of Neptune, the resemblance is not very clear. Pulteney, a statesman, in his day as eminent as the illustrious M.P. for Tiverton, published in the "World" a sketch of Newmarket; but the expense and waste of time of such places seemed to him perfectly frightful. p. 103 It is well that his lordship has been defunct this hundred and fifty years. A horse race then was a much more sober affair than in these enlightened days—when every head is full and every tongue vocal with mental and moral reform.

p. 104

VAUXHALL GARDENS.

Vauxhall is alive. At one time it was thought dead, and people affirmed the fact to be an evidence of the improved state of the metropolis. (Moralists are too prone to be thankful for small mercies.) Had the fact been so, the inference was a fallacy; but we need not trouble ourselves about that, as the fact is otherwise. It is a mistake to suppose that progress is made only in one direction. Vauxhall is associated with the fast life of centuries. It was born in the general and fearful profligacy—the fearful price England paid for the Restoration. In 1661 Evelyn writes of it as a pretty contrived plantation. In 1665, in the diary of Pepys, we find entries of sundry visits to Fox-hall and the Spring Gardens, and "of the humours of the citizens pulling off cherries, and God knows what." Again we are told, "to hear the nightingales and the birds, and here fiddlers, and there a harp, and here laughing, and there the people walking, is mighty diverting." p. 105 That respectable Secretary of the Admiralty also tells us of supper in an arbour, of ladies walking with their masks on, and his righteous soul was shocked to see "how rude some of the young gallants of the town are become," and "the confidence of the vice of the age." To Vauxhall Addison took Sir Roger de Coverley, and Goldsmith the Citizen of the World, who exclaimed, "Head of Confucius, this is fine! this unites rural beauty with courtly magnificence." Here Fielding's Amelia was enraptured with the extreme beauty and elegance of the place. Here Miss Burney gathered incidents for her once popular but now forgotten tales. And here Hogarth, for suggesting paintings, some of which still remain, was presented with a perpetual ticket of admission, and which was last used in 1836. Strange scenes have been done here. One of them is described by Horace Walpole, who graphically narrates how Lady Caroline Petersham stewed chickens over a lamp; and how Betty, the fruit girl, supped with them at a side table. All that is past. Dust and ashes are the fine lords and fine ladies who made Vauxhall the resort of folly and fashion—the fashion is gone, the folly remains. p. 106 Yet never were there more funds subscribed for the conversion of the Jews, or more missionaries sent out to Timbuctoo.

Vauxhall is one of the delusions of London life. It lives on the past—a very common practice in this country, where real knowledge travels very slowly. When Smith comes up to London, his first Sunday he goes to hear the Rev. Mr. Flummery, thinking he is the popular preacher. Ah, Smith! Flummery has ceased to be a popular preacher these twenty years. "What a sweet girl is gone!" exclaims old Jones, as he hears of the death of an ancient flame. Jones forgets the sweet girl had become an old maid of seventy, and had not a tooth in her mouth or a lock of hair on her head but what was artificial. So with Vauxhall. It lives as many a man, or newspaper, or magazine, or institution, on its name. Judge for yourself if you won't take my word. A cab will take you there from the Strand in half an hour, and for the very moderate sum of one shilling the gate will be unlocked and entrance effected. The specialty of the place is the blaze of lights from thousands of lamps. Supposing you to have got over the bewilderment created by their lustre, to eyes not accustomed to such "hall sof dazzling light," p. 107 you perceive a kind of square (the precise definition of it I leave to the mathematicians) with a dancing platform in the middle, a supper room on one side, and boxes all round, where refreshments and seats are supplied. Opposite to the supper-room is a lofty orchestra, glittering all over with many coloured lamps; further on and behind are walks, and trees, and a fountain, with gigantic horses snorting water through their nostrils, and a space for fireworks, the demand for which on the part of the pleasure seekers of the metropolis, if we may judge by the supply, is insatiable. Let us not forget also the Rotunda, a large building with pit, boxes, and gallery, chiefly devoted to horsemanship, neither worse nor better than what is usually seen at such places. The comic singing is a feature of the place. Popular comic songs are not very fresh, nor very witty nor refined, and require, when delivered in public, a good deal of elocution. The point must be apparent, and the emphasis clearly enunciated, but they are much the same here as elsewhere. When you have heard one or two of them, you have heard them all. So much by way of description. The people who come here are

the people whose pleasures are of the lowest character; who are dependent on others; whose life is all outward rather than inward. They are not readers nor thinkers, you may be sure, but the class precisely to whom such places are as hurtful as they are attractive. If a man is to be known by the company he keeps, what are we to think of the habitués of Vauxhall? for after all life is, or ought to be, to us all a stern reality—a battle-field—a victory—not a pleasure garden, or a Vanity Fair; and even in London you may mix with better society than that of painted Traviatas or tipsy men. Smoking, dancing, drinking, is not all life; yet for such purposes Vauxhall solely exists. I much question, if London alone were concerned, so great is the rivalry in this particular style of amusement, whether Vauxhall would be a success; but the provincial element is amazingly strong. I account for that as follows. The railway system has done this for London. It has filled it with strangers. From the wilds of Connemara, from the distant Land's End and remote John o'Groat's, old and young, male and female, rich and poor, wise or foolish, come in shoals to see London and its sights. Now Vauxhall, and its illumination, and its slice of ham, have been the wonder of generations, and to Vauxhall away they rush. Their speech betrayeth them. Look at them. This party is from Lancashire. From the flowery fields of Somersetshire that party have come. Wales has sent her exciteable sons, and Scotland her reckless prodigals, for there are such even ayont the Tweed. Here we have some five or six—a father and mother, a daughter and her husband, and it may be a brother. Those giants were never reared within the sound of Bow bells, and to be impertinent to either the old lady or the young one were the height of folly. Their fashions are not ours, yet are they wondrous jolly; and, woe is me, the head of the family is exhibiting an agility as he bounds up and down as an elephant might, which is unbecoming his years. How is this? Why actually in a remote corner of the pocket, in the innermost depths of that ancient coat, there is a bottle of raw gin, which the old satyr puts to his own mouth, and then hands it to the rest of his party, by whom, in a similar manner, it is applied, till what is left would not hurt the conscience of a teetotaller to drink. It is well his "missus" is there to pilot him home, and the sooner he gets back to his Yorkshire wilds the better. Yet we have a sprinkling of town life. The reader must remember Vauxhall occupies altogether eleven acres of ground, and on one occasion upwards of 20,000 persons paid for admission. Look at that faded pair. Some forty years ago they were fast, as times went, and here they have come to have a peep at the old place, and to wonder how they cared so much about it then. There stands an old fogy of the Regency. Of what hideous debauch can he tell; and here stuffed, and painted, and bewigged, made up from top to toe, he has come to mourn, not to moralise, over the past. A sad sight is he; but sadder still are those pale-faced ones, of elaborate hair, and exquisitely fitting costumes and bewitching Balmorals, now dancing, now chaffing, now drinking, now uproariously merry, but all the time with wanton wiles seeking their human prey in the excitement of music, and laughter, and wine.

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THE PENNY GAFF.

p. 111

Do my readers know Shoreditch? I do not mean the Eastern Counties Railway Station, but the regions dark and dolorous lying beyond. In an old map of London, by my side, dated 1560, I see it marked as a street with but one row of houses on each side, and the five windmills in Finsbury Fields not far off. Here stood the Curtain Theatre. In Stowe's time there were in Shoreditch "two publique houses for the acting and shewe of comedies, tragedies, and histories for recreation." Here, according to the learned and indefatigable Mr. Timbs, "at the Blue Last public-house, porter was first sold, about 1730." And here still, if I may judge from the immense number of public-houses all round, the consumption of porter and other intoxicating liquors is still carried on on a somewhat extensive scale. Hard working and businesslike as Shoreditch is by day, with its clothes marts and extensive shoe depôts, by night it is a great place for amusement. Here are theatres where melodrama reigns supreme. Close by is the renowned Britannia Saloon. And here concerts exist where, over their beer, the listeners are regaled with the sentimental and comic songs of a generation long gathered to its fathers. To me I confess there is somewhat of pathos in these places. What tales cannot that ancient landlord tell! The young, the beautiful, the brave he has outlived, where are they?

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But let us pass on to the penny theatre, a place not hard to find in this region of shell-fish and fruit-pie shops, those sure indications of a neighbourhood rather poor and very wild. We pay our money at the door, and then follow the direction given us by the businesslike young woman who takes the fee, "First turn to the left, and then to the right." But instead of being allowed to enter at once, we have to wait with several others, chiefly boys, very dirty, who regard us apparently with no very favourable eye, till a fresh house is formed. Our new acquaintances are not talkative, and we are not sorry when our turn comes to enter the dirty hole set apart for the entertainment of the Shoreditch youth. We climb up a primitive staircase, and find ourselves in a gallery of the rudest description, a privilege for which we have to pay a penny extra. Here we have an ample view of the stage and the pit, the latter chiefly filled with boys, very dirty, and full of fun, with the usual proportion of mothers with excited babies. The performance commences with a panorama of American scenery, with some very stale American criticisms, about the man who was so tall that he had to go up a ladder to shave himself, and so on; all, however, exciting much mirth amongst the youthful and apple-eating audience. Then a young lady, with very short petticoats and very thick ancles, dances, and takes all hearts by storm. To her succeeds one who sings about true love, but not in a manner which the Shoreditch youthdom affects. Then a fool comes upon the stage, and keeps the pit in a roar, especially when he directs his wit to the three

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musicians who form the orchestra, and says ironically to one of them, “You could not drink a quartern of gin, could you?” and the way in which the allusion was received evidently implied that the enlightened but juvenile audience around me evidently had a very low opinion of a man who could not toss off his quartern of gin. Then we had the everlasting niggers, with the bones, p. 114 and curiously-wrought long coats, and doubtful dialect, and perpetual laughter, which the excited pit copiously rewarded. One boy tossed a button on the stage, another a copper, and another an apple; and so pleasing was this liberality to the supposed young men of African descent, that they did not think it beneath them, or inconsistent with their dignity as professionals, to encourage it in every possible way. And well they might. Those gay blacks very likely had little white faces at home dependent on the liberality of the house for next day’s crust. But the treat of the evening was a screaming farce, in one act, in which the old tale of “Taming the Shrew” was set forth in the most approved Shoreditch fashion. A husband comes upon the stage, whose wife—I would not be ungallant, but conscientious regard to truth compels me sorrowfully to declare—is an unmitigated shrew. She lords it over her husband as no good woman ever did or wishes to do. The poor man obeys till he can stand it no longer. At length all his manhood is aroused. Armed with what he calls a persuader—a cudgel of most formidable pretensions—he astonishes his wife with his unexpected resistance. She tries to regain the mastery, but in vain; and great is the p. 115 delight of all as the husband, holding his formidable instrument over his cowed and trembling wife, compels her to obey his every word. All the unwashed little urchins around me were furious with delight. There was no need for the husband to tell the audience, as he did, as the moral of the piece, that the best remedy for a bad wife was to get such another cudgel for her as that he held in his hand. It was quite clear the little Britons around me had resolved how they would act; and I fear, as they passed out to the number of about 200, few of them did not resolve, as soon as they had the chance, to drink their quartern of gin and to whop their wives.

On another occasion it chanced to me to visit a penny gaff in that dark and dolorous region, the New Cut. There the company and the entertainment were of a much lower character. A great part of the proceedings were indecent and disgusting, yet very satisfactory to the half-grown girls and boys present. In the time of the earlier Georges we read much of the brutality of the lower orders. If we may believe contemporary writers on men and manners, never was the theatre so p. 116 full—never was the audience so excited—never did the scum and refuse of the streets so liberally patronise the entertainment as when deeds of violence and blood were the order of the night. This old savage spirit is dying out, but in the New Cut I fear it has not given way to a better one.

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RAG FAIR.

People often ask, how do the poor live in London. This a question I don’t intend answering on the present occasion. But if you ask how they clothe themselves, my answer is, at Rag Fair. Do my readers remember Dickens’s sketch of Field-lane? In “Oliver Twist,” he writes, “Near to the spot at which Snow-hill and Holborn meet there opens, on the right hand as you come out of the city, a dark and dismal alley, leading to Saffron-hill. In its filthy shops are exposed for sale huge bunches of pocket handkerchiefs of all sizes and patterns, for here reside the traders who purchase them from pickpockets; hundreds of these handkerchiefs hang dangling from pegs outside the windows, or flaunting from the door-posts, and the shelves within are filled with them. Confined as the limits of Field-lane are, it has its barber, its coffee-shop, its beer-shop, and its fried fish warehouse. It is a commercial colony of itself—the emporium of petty larceny, p. 118 visited at early morning and setting in of dusk by silent merchants, who traffic in dark back parlours, and go as strangely as they come. Here the clothes-man, the shoe vamper, and the rag merchant display their goods as signboards to the petty thief, and stores of old iron and bones, and heaps of mildewy fragments of woollen, stuff, and linen rust and rot in the grimy cellars.” Expand this picture. Instead of one street have several—make it the resort of all the dealers in old clo’, old iron, old rags, old tools, old bones, old anything that a human creature can sell or buy; fill it with a miscellaneous crowd of Jews, Irish, navvies, artisans, pickpockets, and thieves, bargaining with all the energy of which their natures are susceptible; make it damp and warm with their vapour, and a very Babel with their discordant sounds, and you get a dim idea of Rag Fair and its guests, unwashed as they appear every day from twelve to two, but especially on a Sunday, to the great scandal of the devout and respectable in that locality, who are too apt to quarrel with the effect and forget the cause.

Let us enter Houndsditch, a place where the Jews collected together long before the royal house of Guelph occupied its present pleasant position on the English throne. Poverty and p. 119 wretchedness, it may be, are bashful at the West End, but they are not so here,

> “Where no contiguous palace rears its head,
> To mark the meanness of their humble shed.”

In a little court on our left, a little way down, we come to a building known as the Old Clothes Exchange. The building was erected some dozen years ago by one of the leading merchants in the old clothes line. A small entrance fee is demanded. You had better pay, as otherwise admission will be denied you. You had better not attempt to pass in without paying, as the toll-collector is an ex-prize-fighter; and the chances are, in a set-to, you would come off second best. If it be Sunday you had better not, especially if the weather be warm, attempt a passage at all.

The scrambling, and wedging, and pushing, and driving are dreadful. A man must have some nerve who forces his way in. In the week day, and you are a seller, you are soon pounced on by the Jews hungering and thirsting after bargains. In that peculiar dialect affected by the ancient people you have the most magnificent offers made. “My coot friend, have you cot any preakage?” says one. “Cot any old boots?” says another. “I alvays gives a coot prishe,” says a third. And the p. 120 seller is surrounded by an eager crowd, as if he had the Koh-i-noor, and was going to part with it dirt cheap. If you are a buyer, you are quite as quickly attacked. “Want a new hat?” says one. “Shall I sell you a coot coat?” says another; and whichever way you turn, you see the same buying and selling. The cheap jewellery, the china ornaments, the general wares, are not of the most *recherché*, but of the most popular character. You may buy a stock close by that will set up all the fairs in England. Here a seller of crockery ware has come back, and is disposing of the treasures he has acquired in the course of his travels. There a woman is discharging a similar miscellaneous cargo. All round are buyers, examining their goods. Everything here will be made useful. That bit of old iron will become new; those boots, ruined, as you deemed them, will be vamped up, and shall dance merrily to accompanying shillalaghs at Donnybrook fair; that resplendent vest, once the delight of Belgravia, in a few weeks will adorn Quashie as he serenades his Mary Blane beneath West Indian moons. Even those bits of waste leather will be p. 121 carefully treasured up and converted into a dye that may tint the rich man’s costly robe. Now, you need not wonder why you find suspicious-looking men and women bargaining with your servants for left-off clothes, or rags, or plunder of any kind, and you are not surprised when you hear even out of this dirty trade riches are made, and the gains are great.

A wit was once asked what he thought of Ireland. “Why,” was his answer, “I never knew before what the people of England did with their cast-off clothes.” A similar remark might be made with regard to Rag Fair. But we have not yet described the locality. Very dark and very dismal, but very much inclined to do business, the Exchange, as it is termed, is not a building of a very gorgeous style of architecture. In its erection the useful and the economical evidently was considered more than the beautiful. It seems destitute alike of shape and substance. Mr. Mayhew says it consists of a plot of ground about an acre in extent; but Mr. Mayhew has certainly fallen into error here. The place is scarcely fenced in; and here and there you come to a hoarding, in the inside of which are some stalls and benches, scarce covered from the rain— p. 122 others not so. Some of these benches, all looking very dirty and greasy, are ranged back to back, and here sit the sellers of old clothes, with their unsightly and unsavoury store of garments strewn or piled on the ground at their feet, while between the rows of petty dealers pass the merchant buyers on the look-out for bargains, or the workman, equally inclined to get as much as possible for his penny. But the curious spectator must not stop here. Near is the “City Clothes Emporium,” and all the streets and alleys in the neighbourhood are similarly occupied. The place has the appearance of a foreign colony. They are not Saxon names you see, nor Saxon eyes that look wistfully at you, nor Saxon dialects you hear, but Hebrew. Every street around is part and parcel of the fair, the bazaar is but one section of the immense market which is here carried on; but let the anxious inquirer not be too curious or too lost in wonder, else some prying hand may be inserted into his pocket, and the loss of a handkerchief, or even of something else more valuable, may be the result of a visit to Rag Fair, a place unparalleled in this vast city for rags, and dirt, and seeming wretchedness. It is true that part of the nuisance is done away with. The p. 123 police keep a close look-out on a Sunday, and a great portion of the traffic on that day is very properly stopped. But there are greater nuisances in the neighbourhood on the Sabbath which the police do not look after, but which they might.

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THE COMMERCIAL ROAD
AND THE COAL-WHIPPERS.

The Commercial Road, abutting on the Docks and Whitechapel, is the residence of the London coal whippers—a race of men singularly unfortunate—the complete slaves of the publicans of that quarter, and deserving universal sympathy. I have been down in their wretched homes; I have seen father, mother, children all sleeping, eating, living in one small apartment, ill-ventilated, inconvenient, and unhealthy; and I believe no class of labourers in this great metropolis, where so many thousands are ill-paid and hard-worked, and are reduced almost to the condition of brutes, suffer more than the coal-whippers you meet in that busy street of traffic and toil—the Commercial Road.

The coal-whippers are men employed to *whip* the coals out of the colliers into the barges, which latter bring them up for the supply of the inhabitants of London. Theirs is a precarious and laborious life, and therefore they have special claims upon the consideration of the public. Mr. p. 125 Deering tells us “it may possibly serve to bespeak interest in the subject if it be known that it is one which affects for weal or for woe no fewer than 10,000 persons, there being nearly 2,000 coal-whippers, together with their wives and families.” From the opening of the coal-whippers’ office in 1843 to the close of 1850, the quantity of coals delivered through it was 16,864,613¼ tons, and the amount of wages paid to the men during that time was £589,180 11s. 5¾d. At times these men have to wait long without employment, sometimes a ship only breaks bulk, and a small quantity of coal is taken out, sometimes the whole cargo is worked right out. Thus the men’s remuneration varies. In some cases a coal-whipper earns but 8s. 9d. a week, and in none

more than 16s. Let us now speak of the work. As we have already intimated, that is very hard. It is carried on by gangs of nine, four work in the hold of the ship and fill the basket, four work on the ways, and whip the coal—that is, raise the basket to the top—and one, the basket man, turns it into the meter's box. The four on the whip have very hard work, and after twelve or fourteen p. 126 tons have been raised go down into the hold, where they are choked with coal dust, but have not quite so difficult a task. Men who are employed in this labour describe it as most laborious and irksome. Nor from their description can we well conceive it to be otherwise.

Under the old system these men got all their work through the public-house. That was a fearful system. We have heard coal-whippers speak of it as "slavery, tyranny, and degradation;" and well they might. "The only coves who got the work," as one man told us, "were the Lushingtons." If a man did not spend his money at the public-house he got no employment; and actually we heard in one case of a *landlady* who turned off a gang in the middle of their work because they would not spend so much money in her public-house as she thought desirable. One publican who had several of these gangs under his thumb, by various exactions, we were positively assured, made as much as £35 per week by them. The publicans, says Mr. Deering, the able and intelligent secretary to the commissioners, compelled every man to pay on an average to the amount of eight shillings, and in some instances ten shillings, per week for liquor on shore p. 127 and on board, whether drunk by him or not. The plan was to compel the coal-whippers to visit their houses previous to obtaining employment, and on the night before obtaining a ship to commence the score, and at six o'clock in the morning, before going to work, to drink a pot of beer, or spirits to an equal amount of value; then to take on board for each gang nine pots of beer, to be repeated on delivering every forty-nine tons during the day; after which they were compelled to pay nine or ten shillings per man for each ship for gear. The evil effects of such a system it is unnecessary to point out. After a week's hard work, a man had nothing to take home. The coal-whippers became a drunken and degraded class, the family were starved, the boys early learned to thieve, and the girls were too often thrown upon the streets. No wonder the men rebelled against this cruel tyranny. For long they bore it, but at length they plucked up courage, and demanded deliverance.

Generation after generation had struggled for their rights, and numerous Acts were passed to redress their grievances; but no sooner was an Act passed than ways and means were found to evade it. Then four brave men, Robert Newell, Henry Barthorpe, George Applegate, and Daniel p. 128 Brown, created amongst their oppressed fellow-labourers an excitement which never subsided till the Corporation of London took their case in hand. Lieutenant Arnold, with a view to benefit them, established an office, but the publicans combined against him and drove him out of the field. The London Corporation appointed a committee to examine into the whole matter. Government was besieged, but Mr. Labouchere told the coal-whippers that they could not interfere, "as it would be too great an interference with the rights of labour." The coal-whippers, however, were not to be daunted, and after years of unremitting toil, in which their claims had become increasingly appreciated, Mr. Gladstone prevailed upon the House of Commons to pass the Act which on the 22nd of August, 1843, received the royal assent. The Act simply provided that an office should be established where the coal-whippers should assemble, and that owners and captains of vessels discharging their cargoes by hired men and by the process of whipping should make to them the first offer to discharge their cargoes. It in no way interfered with or p. 129 attempted to fix the price of the labour. This was left as a matter of contract between employers and employed. As there were conflicting interests to be consulted, the bill provided that the proposed office should be placed under the management of nine commissioners, four of whom should be appointed by the Board of Trade, and four by the Corporation of the City of London, the chairman to be the chairman for the time being of the Shipowners' Society of London. To show how the Act has worked, we make the following extract from an appeal to the House of Commons by the Committee of the Registered Coal-whippers in the Port of London, published in May of the present year, and which bears the names of John Farrow, John Doyle, William Brown, Michael Barry, John Cronin. They say:—"The object contemplated by the Legislature in the establishment of the office was to secure to the men the full amount of their earnings *immediately* after their labour was completed, with the exception of one farthing in the shilling, which is required to be left in the office to defray necessary expenses. At first the office was fiercely opposed by interested parties, because it broke up a system of vile, degrading, and unjust extortion, by which p. 130 these men derived their profits; but this opposition soon subsided, the price of labour became equalised by an understanding between the employers and the employed, the former being at liberty to offer any price they were willing to give, and the latter to accept or refuse as they thought proper; and the only compulsory clause in the Act, in favour of the coal-whippers, is that, an office being established at which they assemble for the purpose of being hired, the shipowners *shall first make an offer to the coal-whippers* registered at the office, and if refused by them at the price offered, a discharge is given, empowering the captains to obtain any other labourers elsewhere, at not a greater price than that offered to the registered men. The good effects resulting from the establishment of the office are—relief to the men from extortion and a demoralising system, ruinous alike to both body and soul—a fair turn of work in rotation—immediate payment of their wages in money—and an opportunity of disposing of their labour (if any is to be had elsewhere) in the interim of their clearing one ship and obtaining another. The advantage to the trade has been the regularity and certainty with which they obtain their coals p. 131 from on board ship, instead of the injurious delay which occurred before the office was established, while the men (goaded by oppression) and the captains were contending about the price of the labour; and the advantage to the shipowner has been—the prevention of delay in the delivery of his cargoes—by always finding a sufficient number of men in attendance at the office,

for the delivery of the ships—steadiness in the price of labour, and avoidance of detention through ‘strikes’ for higher wages, *and on the whole, a lower price for labour than prevailed before the office was established*. In some years, nearly £100,000 has passed through the office for wages earned, but of late that amount has been greatly reduced in consequence of the introduction of machinery in docks and other places; the decrease in importation coastwise; the employment of ‘*bonâ fide*’ servants by some gas companies, and by a few coal merchants; and *by frequent evasions of the Act through the interference of persons who have nothing whatever to do with the payment of wages, and who derive pecuniary advantage to themselves by so doing*. The retention of the word ‘purchaser’ in the Act gives them power to do this.”

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In August, 1856, the Act which did so much good expired. Parliament refused to continue it on the express promise of parties connected with the coal trade, that a model office should be created, which should be conducted in such a manner that the publicans should not be able to renew the hideous evil of the old system. This contract with Parliament has been broken, and at this moment the coal-whippers are suffering from a return to the fearful slavery and tyranny of old times. Already one-third of the trade is again in the hands of the publicans. The first thing the model office did was immediately to throw 252 coal-whippers out of employment. Of course these men were necessitated to go to the publicans. Another complaint against the model office is, that in two cases the men were paid 2d. a ton, and in another case 3d. a ton, less than the price paid to the office. Another grievance is, instead of the persons connected with the coal trade going to the model office, the *bonâ fide* offices created by the Act, and by means of which it was abused, still exist, and we were informed one of the largest merchants has still his office with a gang of eighty-one men. p. 133 Of course the publicans are delighted. They have the whole trade in their own hands again; but this must not be. The righteous feeling of the country must be interposed between the publican and his victims—a body of hard-working men are not to be forced into drunkenness and poverty and crime merely that a few publicans may increase their ill-gotten gains. Reason, morality, religion, all protest against such a damnable doctrine. Almost immediately after the Act had ceased, the Rev. Mr. Sangar, the rector of Shadwell, presided over a meeting of coal-whippers “because the coal-whipped office was established in his parish, and because the Coal-whippers’ Act had put down drunkenness, prevented the exactions of middlemen, induced morality, and benefited a large number of industrious men.” Meetings for a similar purpose are held almost every month. On similar grounds we have taken up the case of the coal-whippers—and for the same reasons we ask the aid of the charitable, and religious, and humane. Especially do we ask the temperance societies of the metropolis to interfere in this matter. Many of the coal-whippers are total abstainers. Now that Mr. Gladstone’s Act is obsolete, p. 134 they have some of them been forced back into the public-house. We must save them ere they be lost for ever. The coal-whippers are in earnest in this matter. They want very little. Simply a renewal of Mr. Gladstone’s Act, with the proviso that there shall be only one office. It was the absence of that proviso that enabled interested parties to evade the provisions of the Act to a certain extent. Surely this is no great boon for Parliament to grant.

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THE STOCK EXCHANGE.

This country, said the late Mr. Rothschild, is, in general, the bank of the whole world. That distinguished capitalist never said a truer thing. If Russia wants a railway, or Turkey an army, if Ohio would borrow cash, or Timbuctoo build a railway, they all come to London. The English stockholder is the richest and softest animal under the sun—as repudiated foreign stocks and exploded joint-stock projects at home have too frequently illustrated. When the unfortunate stockholder has in this way invested his all, the result is at times very painful. The cause of this is not always to be traced to “greenness,” but to the desire to derive large dividends or interest, without due regard to the security of the investment. Not even is the *bonâ fide* investor always safe. He is the goose that lays the golden egg. In one respect this weakness is somewhat tragic. p. 136 For instance, to give an extreme case:—Suppose A. B., twelve years back, had, as the result of a life of industry, saved £5,000, and invested it in the London and North Western Railway, when that famous stock was in demand, and quoted as high as £250, what must be the unhappy condition of that too-confiding A. B., supposing he has not already died of a broken heart, when he finds London and North Western stock quoted, as at this present time, under £100? Again, supposing C. D. had died, leaving his disconsolate widow and twelve children, innocent but helpless, a nice little property consisting of shares in the Western Bank of Scotland. What must be the state of that disconsolate widow and those twelve children, innocent but helpless, upon finding that not only have all the original shares completely vanished into ducks and drakes, but that upon each share a responsibility of somewhere about one hundred and fifty pounds has been incurred besides? Can we calculate the sum total of bitter misery thus created and scattered far and wide? As well might we attempt to realise the dark and dismal regions of the damned. The caution cannot be too often repeated, to avoid investments which entail unknown liabilities, or which are subject to great fluctuations of price or the amount of dividend. Abundant opportunity p. 137 for safe investment is offered in the Debentures, Preference and Guaranteed Stocks of British Railways, which pay from 4 to 5 per cent. per annum. The aggregate value of the stocks and shares which are dealt in on the London Stock Exchange is somewhat bewildering in its enormous amount. First and foremost are the several stocks constituting the National Debt of Great Britain, which may be taken at between eight and nine hundred millions. The capitals of

the various British railways amount to upwards of three hundred millions. The capitals of the Bank of England and of sundry joint-stock banks amount to more than thirty millions. Then there is a large amount invested in canals, gas and water, steam, telegraph, and dock companies. The total amount of American railways is about one hundred and sixty-eight millions sterling; European railways, two hundred millions; and those of India and our colonies, fifty millions. Moreover, there is a vast aggregate amount of foreign stocks and loans, which our readers will not care that we particularise.

The grand mart for the traffic in such things is a large building situate in Capel-court, just opposite the Bank of England. It has three other entrances—one in Shorter's-court, Throgmorton-street, one in New-court, ditto, and one in Hercules-passage, Broad-street. p. 138 You cannot get in, for a porter guards each door, and if you elude him you are easily detected by the *habitués*, and obliged to beat a precipitate retreat. But from the entrance in Hercules-passage, by peeping through the glass folding doors, you may manage to get an imperfect view of the interior. You will see that in the middle of the day there are a great number of well-dressed, sharp-looking gentlemen talking very energetically, and apparently doing a great deal of business. As they pass in and out you hear them discourse as familiarly of thousands as

> "Maids of fourteen do of puppy dogs."

Let me add that there are a variety of distinct markets—the English for stocks and exchequer bills, the foreign for stocks, and the railway and mining, and miscellaneous share department. I may also add that a news-room is attached, where the daily papers, especially the city articles, are very eagerly perused. I am told that the *Daily News* is the favourite, and that the demand for that paper is very great. The Stock Exchange does not recognise in its dealings any other parties than its own members. p. 139 Every bargain, therefore, whether for account of the member effecting it, or for account of a principal, must be fulfilled according to the regulations and usages of the house. Its affairs are conducted by a committee of thirty, annually elected. "Every member of the Stock Exchange and every clerk to a member shall attend the committee for general purposes when required, and shall give the committee such information as may be in his possession relative to any matter then under investigation." The committee have the right to expel any member guilty of dishonourable or disgraceful conduct, or who may violate any of the regulations, or fail to comply with any of the committee's decisions.

As regards small people outside like ourselves, the functions of the Stock Exchange are soon fulfilled. I have worked hard—I have saved a few hundreds—I want to invest them—I call upon a stock-broker—they are (I mean nothing offensive by the comparison) as thick as thieves in this neighbourhood. I commission him to buy me a certain number of shares in such and such a company. My broker rushes into the Exchange, goes to the particular spot where the dealer in such shares is to be met with, and buys them for me, to be delivered on such a day. p. 140 I pay him a commission for brokerage, and my business is done. Suppose I want to buy government stock. What is stock? says one, unhappily, in consequence of his own laziness and ill-luck, or of the laziness and ill-luck of his fathers before him, not a holder of such. Stock, O benighted individual, is a term applied to the various funds which constitute the National Debt, the interest on which is paid half-yearly. Few persons buy or sell stock except through a broker, and this is the original business of the stockbroker, and it was for this the Stock Exchange was erected in 1803. It is only since the peace that the present immense traffic has sprung up in miscellaneous and railway shares. Let me suppose I have a thousand pounds to invest in the Three per Cents., which are now quoted at about 96. I wait on a stockbroker; he goes over to the Exchange and purchases them for me, and then sees to their transfer in the Bank of England, receiving as his commission one eighth per cent., or 2s. 6d. in the £100 upon the amount of stock transferred. But I am of a speculative turn, and wish to make a fortune rapidly by means of the Stock Exchange. I again have recourse to a broker. p. 141 As I assume that I am a mere gambler—a man of straw—I stand to lose or gain a large sum of money on a certain contingency. I draw a blank, and leave my broker in the lurch, who has to settle his accounts as best he can. If he cannot pay by half-past two on the day of settlement, which in shares is once a fortnight, and in consols monthly, he despatches a short communication to the committee of the Stock Exchange; an official then suddenly gives three loud knocks with a mallet, and announces the unpleasant fact that my broker is unable to meet his engagements. He is termed a lame duck, and cannot again figure on the Exchange till he pays a composition of 6s. 8d. in the pound. The readmission of defaulters is in three classes. The first class to be for cases of failure arising from the defection of principals, or from other unfortunate vicissitudes, where no bad faith or breach of the regulations of the house has been practised; where the operations have been in reasonable proportion to the defaulter's means or resources; and where his general character has been irreproachable. The second class, for cases marked by indiscretion, and by the absence of reasonable caution only, or by conduct reprehensible in other respects. p. 142 The third class for cases where the defaulter is ineligible under either of the former classes, but whom, nevertheless, the committee may not feel warranted in excluding from the Stock Exchange. The final decision of the committee on each defaulter's application will be notified to the members in the usual way, and remain posted in the Stock Exchange for forty days. Stockbrokers rarely go into the Bankruptcy Court, as the house appoints assignees, and settles the affair in a much easier way. Lame ducks are not always ruined in purse. I knew one who waddled off the Stock Exchange, he having been a speculator on his own account, and thus evaded the payment of rather a heavy sum. I met him at Brighton this summer, living in one of the best houses in Kemp-town.

Stock-brokers are very facetious fellows, and amuse their leisure hours in many ways, such as

tossing for halfcrowns in a hat, and practical jokes; occasionally a good deal of small wit passes current. I have heard of an almanac, circulated in MS., in which the various peculiarities of individual members of the Exchange were very cleverly hit off. A late Exchange wit has given birth to the following *jeu d'esprit*, which has attained a wide-spread popularity in the City:—

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> "When the market takes a rise,
> Then the public comes and buys;
> But when they want to realise,
>   Oh! it's 'Oop de doodum doo!'"

When the government broker appears to operate on behalf of the Commissioners, for the Reduction of the National Debt he mounts into a "box," and is surrounded by a clamorous host, all eager to buy or sell.

The present number of members of the Stock Exchange approaches nearly 800, each paying a subscription of £10 per annum, besides finding securities for between £800 and £900 for three years. Our stockbroker generally spends his money freely. If he is a married man he has a nice villa at Norwood or Clapham, and affects a stylish appearance. Then there are the "jobbers," who remain inside the stock market, waiting for the broker, and who are prepared, immediately he appears, to make a price at which they are either buyers or sellers—the jobber calculating upon making it right with the broker, who has undertaken an operation the reverse of his own. Occasionally the jobber runs considerable risk, since, after concluding a bargain, and while endeavouring to obtain a profit on it, the market may turn. Still he is a useful middle-man, and saves the broker a world of trouble.

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But there is much business transacted which is less legitimate, and is known as time bargains, which are bargains to deliver stock on certain days at a certain price, the seller, of course, hoping that the price will fall, and the buyer, that it will rise when the period for completing the bargain has arrived. The speculative settlement is effected without making full payment for stock; the losing party simply pays the difference. One who speculates for a rise is a Bull (it is said the great Rothschild made a vast deal of money in this way), the speculator for a fall is a Bear. Continuation is the interest on money lent on the security of stock. A great deal of business is done in this way. A merchant, or a railway company, or a bank, have large sums of money to dispose of. Instead of locking it up they employ a broker, who lends it on certain securities, for a few days or a few weeks. Operations on the Stock Exchange answer in this way, but the small tradesman, or clerk, or professional man who ventures within the charmed circle of Capel-court for the purpose of speculation, generally learns bitterly to rue the day.

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THE LONDON HOSPITAL.

I am walking along the streets, and in doing so pass a scaffolding where some new buildings are being erected. Suddenly I hear a shriek, and see a small crowd collected. A beery Milesian, ascending a ladder with a hod of mortar, slips and falls on the pavement below. He is a stranger in London, has no friends, no money, scarcely any acquaintance. "What's his name?" we ask. "He ain't got no name," says one of his mates; "we calls him Carroty Bill." What's to be done? Why, take him to the hospital. The police fetch a stretcher. "Carroty Bill" is raised on it, and a small procession is formed. It swells as it goes along. The idle street population joins. We form one. A medical student is in the rear; he meets a chum, and exclaims exultingly, "They are taking him to our hospital." The chum turns back, and the door is reached; admittance is easy. Happily, the place is not a Government establishment, and patients are received whilst there is hope. Poor "Carroty Bill," bruised and bleeding, yet stupid with drink, is examined carefully by the attendant surgeons. It is of no use asking him what's the matter; his expressions, never very direct or refined, are now very muddy, and not a little coarse. A careful diagnosis reveals the extent of the injuries received. All that science can do for him is done. If he is taken as an inmate he will have as good nursing and food, and as skilful care and as unremitting attention, as if he were a prince of royal blood. Wonderful places are these hospitals. If Sawney, subject to an unpleasant sensation on the epidermis, blesses the memory of the good duke who erected on his broad domain convenient posts, let us bless a thousandfold the memory of Rahere, who obtained from Henry I. a piece of waste ground, upon which he built a hospital (now known as St. Bartholomew's) for a master, brethren, and sisters, sick persons, and pregnant women; or of Thomas Guy, son of a lighterman in Horsleydown; but himself a bookseller in Lombard-street after the Great Fire; or of the nameless Prior of Bermondsey, who founded, adjoining the wall of his monastery, a house of alms, now known as St. Thomas's Hospital. Likewise let us thankfully record the gifts of the rich, of whose liberality such hospitals as those of King's, and University, and Westminster, and the London, and St. George's, are the magnificent results.

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Now let us return to our friend Carroty Bill. As we have intimated, he is in the ward appropriated to such cases. One of the professors is now going his round, accompanied by his students. Let us go in. The first thing that strikes us is the size, and cleanliness, and convenience of the wards; how comfortable they are, how light, how cheerful, how lofty, and well ventilated! Each patient is stretched on a clean bed, and at the top are pinned the particulars of his case, and on a chair by his side are the few little necessaries he requires. The practised physician soon detects the

disease and the remedies. His pupils are examined; the patient forms the subject of a hasty lecture. One is asked what he would do, another what disease such and such a symptom denotes; a word is whispered to the nurse; the sick man, whose wistful eye hangs on every movement, is bid to keep up his spirits, and he feels all the more confident and the better fitted to struggle back to health for the few short words of the professor, to whom rich men pay enormous fees, and whose fame perhaps extends over the habitable globe. And so we pass on from bed to bed. Occasionally the professor extracts a moral. This man is dying of gin. "How much did you take a day?"—"Only a quartern."—"And for how many years?"—"Seven." The professor shakes his head—the students know that the man is past cure, that death is only a question of time. A similar process is gone through on the women's ride, and anxiously do sad eyes follow the little group as the professor and students pass on, in their best way mitigating human agony, and bidding the downcast hope. What tales might be told! Here lies down the prodigal to die; here the village maid hides her shame beneath the dark wings of death. Under these hospital walls—reared and maintained by Christian charity, what men once proud, and rich, and great—what women once tenderly nursed and slavishly obeyed—what beauties once fondly caressed, old, withered, wan, without money and without friends, alone in the bleak, bitter world—linger and pass away for ever.

 Let us go down stairs, along that long passage through which eager students are hurrying. The door opens, and we find ourselves in a theatre, as full as it can possibly be of the future surgeons of England, now very rough and noisy. At the bottom, far beneath us, is a small space with a long narrow table, covered with oilskin; behind the table is a door. That door opens, and one or two of the *élite* of the students known as dressers enter. A matronly female, dressed in the hospital garb, follows; some stout porters bring in a poor creature gently, and place him on the table, and a few professors and professional assistants fill up the group; the noisy students are still and eager. The professor advances to the table, in a few words explains the nature of the malady, and the patient, more dead than alive, endeavours to nerve himself for his impending fate. It is our old friend; his leg is smashed and requires amputation. An assistant administers chloroform, while the operator looks on, watch in hand. In a few seconds it is clear the patient is insensible, and the knife is handed to the operator, who, with his arm bare, and his sleeves tucked up, commences his painful task. Up squirts the red blood, and many a pale face and averted eye around testify how painful the exhibition is to those who are not accustomed to it. Happily, the medical men near have the calm composure and readiness of resource true science suggests. The first incision made, and the skin peeled around, an assistant hands a saw, and in the twinkling of an eye the limb is severed, and the stump, bleeding and smoking, is being sewn up by skilful hands almost before the poor fellow wakes up, wearied and exhausted by loss of blood, from what must have been to him, if we may judge by his moans and exclamations, a terrible dream. As soon as possible he is borne away, the blood is sponged up, the table wiped down; and another patient, it may be a pale-faced girl or a little boy suffering from some fatal malformation, succeeds. All that humanity can suggest is resorted to. Here science loses her stern aspects, and beats with a woman's tenderness and love; and not in vain, for from that table rise, who otherwise would have painfully perished, many to bless their families, it may be the world. But all is over, and we follow the crowd out, avoiding that other passage leading to the dissecting-room, where on many a table lie the mangled forms of what were once men and women, in all stages of dissection and decay, with students hard at work on them, painfully gathering or seeking to gather a clue to the mystery of mysteries we call life. Possibly by the fire-place some half-dozen young fellows will be smoking and drinking beer. But why note the contrast? Out of the dissecting-room, beyond the narrow precincts of the hospital, masked in gay clothes, with faces all red with paint and wrinkled with idiotic leer, stand side by side the living and the dead.

The principal London Hospitals are the following:—1. St. Bartholomew's Hospital, in West Smithfield, first founded in the twelfth century, and refounded by Henry VIII. in 1546. The building, a spacious quadrangular structure, is principally modern, having been finished in 1770. It makes up 580 beds. In 1848,71,573 were relieved by this hospital, viz., 5,826 inpatients, 19,149 out-patients, and 46,598 casual ditto. Necessity is the only recommendation to this institution; and patients are received without limitation. The medical staff is equal to any in the metropolis. The staircase was gratuitously painted by Hogarth. 2. Guy's Hospital, St. Thomas's Street, Southwark, founded in 1721, contains accommodation for 580 in-patients, and has an excellent museum and theatre of anatomy. This magnificent hospital, which consists of two quadrangles and two wings, was founded and endowed by Thomas Guy, a bookseller, who expended £18,793 upon the building, and left £219,419 for its endowment—the largest sum, perhaps, that has ever been expended by any individual on similar purposes. Recently, however, Guy's Hospital has met with another benefactor, but little inferior, in point of liberality, to its founder; a citizen, of the name of Thomas Hunt, having bequeathed to it, in 1829, the princely sum of £200,000! The medical school attached to this hospital, while under the superintendence of the late Sir Astley Cooper, was one of the most extensive, and probably, also, the best in the empire. 3. St. Thomas's Hospital, in High Street, Borough, was formed out of two other charities by Edward VI., and rebuilt in 1693. Additions were made in 1732, and a large part was rebuilt in 1836. It contains 18 wards, and 428 beds. It has an income of about £25,000 a year, derived almost wholly from rents of estates in London and the country. 4. St. George's Hospital, near Hyde Park Corner, lately rebuilt, has a fine front, 200 feet in length, facing the Green Park. It accommodates 460 in-patients. 5. The Middlesex Hospital, near Oxford Street, founded in 1745, has 285 beds, and relieves numerous out-patients. 6. London Hospital, in Whitechapel, was founded in 1740. Its wards accommodate about 250 patients. 7. Westminster Hospital, rebuilt in

1833, near the Abbey, has 174 beds; but three wards, containing space for fifty additional beds, are unfurnished, notwithstanding there is a great demand for hospital accommodation. 8. The Marylebone and Paddington Hospital, opened in 1850, has 150 beds, which it is proposed to increase to 376, supposing the necessary funds to be forthcoming. This, and the four last mentioned hospitals, depend wholly, or almost wholly, on voluntary subscriptions, which are said to be very insufficient to meet the demands upon them. The University College and King's College Hospitals, and Charing Cross Hospital, are smaller establishments of the same nature, each accommodating about 120 patients, and there are other establishments of the same description. Medical schools are connected with the above hospitals, in which lectures are p. 154 delivered by the officers, and which are attended by several hundreds of students. Within the last few years the number of medical students has considerably decreased.

PORTLAND PLACE.

p. 155

The worst effects of drunkenness are, perhaps, after all, its indirect ones. It is a sad sight to see man stricken down in his prime, and woman in her beauty; to see individuals' hopes and prospects blighted; to see in that carcase staggering by the utter wreck and ruin of an immortal soul. But this is but a small portion of the damage done to humanity by the ravages of intemperance. Look at our great social evil. I need not name it. No one who walks the streets of London by night requires to be informed what that is. Has drink nothing to do with it? Ask that unfortunate, who has just commenced her evening's walk. She will tell you that when she parted with her innocence she had previously been drugged with drink; that if it were not for drink she could not pursue her unhallowed career; that her victims are stimulated by drink; and that without the gin-palace or the public-house she and such as she could not exist. I do not now p. 156 speak of the worst forms of prostitution, of the gin-palaces in the East frequented by drunken sailors, where women are kept as a source of attraction and revenue; but of the better classes, of the dashing women who are supplied with expensive dresses by respectable Oxford-street tradesmen in the expectation of being paid by some rich victim; the women whom you meet dressed so gay in Regent-street or Portland-place.

Once upon a time there was a rascally old nobleman who lived in a big house in Piccadilly. Mr. Raikes describes him as "a little sharp-looking man, very irritable, and swore like 10,000 troopers, enormously rich, and very selfish." He sat all day long at a low window, leering at beauty as it passed by, and under his window was a groom waiting on horseback to carry his messages to any one whom he remarked in the street. If one did not know that we lived in a highly moral age, one would fancy many such old noblemen lived in the neighbourhood of Portland-place, for in the streets leading thence, and reaching as far back as Tottenham-court-road, we have an immense female population, all existing and centred there, who live by vicious means—all with the common feeling of their sex rooted out and destroyed; all intended by nature p. 157 to diffuse happiness around; all a curse on all with whom they have to do. In this small circle, there is enough vicious leaven to leaven all London. It is impossible to get a true estimate of their number. Guesses of all kinds have been made, but none are exactly to be depended on. In a great capital like ours, where wealthy sensualists can and do pay enormous sums for the gratification of their whims—(I have seen it stated that on one occasion a gentleman went into a house in Norton-street with a £500 bank-note, and after staying a few hours received but £20 change)—it is not alone the professedly vicious—the class whom we call prostitutes—who prostitute themselves. As fine shops are pointed out in fashionable streets, which are said to be houses of the most infamous description, in spite of the display of lace and millinery in the window, so there are thousands of women, supposed to be respectable, and to live in a respectable manner, who yet are to all intents and purposes prostitutes, though they would not be classified as such. Now the number of this latter class is much exaggerated. Towards the close of the last century, when the population of London amounted to about a million, Dr. p. 158 Colquhoun, magistrate of the Thames Police, asserted the number of prostitutes to be at least 50,000. If prostitution has followed the same ratio of increase as the population, the number now must be considered as truly appalling. But evidently the Doctor's estimate is exaggerated. At a period much nearer to our own, Mr. Chadwick puts down the number, excluding the City, at 7,000; Mr. Mayne, at from 8,000 to 10,000. The City Police estimates the number at 8,000, and this estimate is supported by Dr. Ryan, and Mr. Talbot, secretary to the Association formed in London for the protection of young girls. This is a very high figure; but a recent French writer tells us that in London, in the higher ranks of life, the proportion of vicious women to virtuous are as one to three! and in the lower ranks virtue does not exist at all!!! At any rate, there is reason to believe that in London there are 5,000 infamous houses. If besides we reckon up the procuresses, the keepers of low gin-palaces and beer-shops, where women are the bait, we are lost and bewildered, and dare not trust ourselves to give in numbers any idea of the persons directly and indirectly connected with prostitution, or of the sum spent annually in London on p. 159 that vice alone. And all this is carried on in the most methodical way. There are men and women whose constant employment is to search all parts of the metropolis for fresh victims; and to them young girls from the country and servant maids-of-all-work are easy prey. Then letters are written and sent to the clubs and to the patrons of such infamy, and they are furnished with all the particulars, and the price of the victim's willing or unwilling seduction and shame. This state of things is progressive. Last year the returns of the City missionaries show an increase in their

districts of fallen women to the number of 1,035. Of course it is only with the dregs that the City missionary comes in contact. While a woman preserves her health, and youth, and good looks, she lives in better quarters than those into which the City missionary generally finds his way. For a time she is gay; she dresses fine, spends money freely, drinks, and sings, and then prematurely becomes old, and sad, and poor.

Is this ever to be so? Is woman always to sell herself to man? And is man to dream that the smile thus bought is no lie, but a precious truth? I don't suppose that if men were temperate universal chastity would be the result; but that we should have less immorality is, I think, an admitted fact. Why are women, prostitutes? Chiefly, we are told, because of poverty; and of all causes of poverty, is not intemperance the greatest? Would you see how one vice is connected with another? Come up Portland-place at night. True, there are no public-houses here, but they are plentiful enough in the neighbourhood; and in them all night the men and painted women from Portland-place madden themselves with drink. Yes, here are the women that should have been British wives and mothers utterly perverted, and dragging down with them many a heart that might have emerged into a noble life. Lust and intemperance have slain them. "Lost, lost, lost for ever!" is the cry that greets us as we look at them.

An association has been formed in this neighbourhood to wipe away this plague spot. In their report, the committee state, when the movement commenced, which issued in the establishment of the association at the close of 1857, the condition of the districts (All Souls and Trinity), comprising the streets lying immediately to the eastward of Portland-place, was perfectly appalling. It was then calculated that in those streets there were not less than 140 notorious houses of ill-fame, containing from six to ten fallen women each, which fearful array of prostitution was swelled by a large number of young women, lodging in the districts, who were known to be gaining their livelihood nominally by working for shops, but principally by the means of night prostitution. One natural result of this dense aggregation of depravity in a narrow spot was the front of insolent and shameless defiance which vice had put on. Indecent exhibitions in broad day from the windows of these houses, utterances the most revolting, that startled and shocked the ear of the passenger who had unwarily penetrated these haunts of infamy, together with the outrageous conduct of the unhappy children of shame, who even before the shades of night had fallen were wont to come forth in hundreds upon the pavements of Portland-place and Regent-street, seemed to indicate a determination that no vestige of respectability should be suffered to linger in a neighbourhood which not thirty years before was as pure and as much resorted to as any of the most favoured districts of western London. The keepers of these houses were many of them foreigners; some were known to the police as determined forgers, gamblers, and thieves. Others, indeed the principal part, were females grown old in the path of depravity, in whose bosom every spark of womanly tenderness had become quenched; who could treat, indeed, with a show of kindness the unhappy girls they had enticed to their doors, so long as they were able to satisfy their exorbitant demands, but who did not hesitate to cast them out into a deeper degradation, or utter destitution, the moment a decay of their attractions or ill health had disabled them from paying the extravagant charges for their hired rooms and dresses. Riotous and brutal outrages were constantly taking place in these houses, and evidence that crimes of violence and sensuality of the darkest type had been enacted in them came to light. It was, moreover, ascertained that among those wretched traders in sin were those who had embarked in a still more repulsive branch of their guilty trade, and were making large gains by turning their houses into receptacles for young unfallen girls imported from abroad, who were sold over from time to time to the neighbouring brothel keepers. Such was the awful moral pestilence which, up to that time, was raging unchecked, and year by year it was rapidly enlarging the area of its ravages.

At the meeting held to receive this report, the Rev. Mr. Garnier stated that "he visited himself a house in Norton-street, where in one room he saw a seat placed around so as to hold as many of the poor creatures as possible on a day that was appointed for brothel keepers, to attend and bid for their purchase (hear, and much sensation). The unfortunate girls thus disposed of were brought from abroad, and while connected with the House of Commons he had the best evidence of this, for noblemen and members of parliament showed letters they continually received soliciting them to partake of the depravity (much sensation). The letters spoke of a beautiful girl just imported from Belgium or France, and the nobleman or gentleman, whichever he might be, was asked to visit her, as she was at his service. In one case a letter was received from the rectory district of that parish (Marylebone), in which it was stated that a girl at a certain address was ready to be given up to lust to the highest bidder. These letters were addressed to the Speaker as well as the members of the House of Commons, and this, together with the spectacle he (the Rev. gentleman) witnessed in Norton-street, was, he considered, very good evidence of the abominable traffic that was carried on in this country.

"The Rev. Mr. Marks said, within the last fifteen months he was called to visit three Jewesses, painful as the duty was, and this visit was made in the Rev. Mr. Garnier's district. These three girls had been imported for the purposes of prostitution (hear, hear). In one case alone he was enabled to take the poor creature from the abominable vice that threatened her, and sent her home; and he nearly succeeded with another, but with regret—aye, deep regret, he said so—he was prevented. A sum of £200 had been offered to retain the girl, and this sum was offered by the brother of an M.P."

The discussion of the delicate question, as the *Times* terms it, has lately received new light in an unexpected quarter. The victims themselves have taken to writing. "Another Unfortunate"

describes her parents. They were drunkards—their chief expense was gin—their children were left to grow up without moral training of any kind. The writer says:—"We heard nothing of religion. Sometimes when a neighbour died we went to the burial, and thus got within a few steps of the church. If a grand funeral chanced to fall in our way we went to see that, too—the fine black horses and nodding plumes—as we went to see the soldiers when we could for a lark. No parson ever came near us. The place where we lived was too dirty for nicely-shod gentlemen. 'The publicans and sinners' of our circumscribed, but thickly-populated locality had no 'friend' among them. Our neighbourhood furnished many subjects to the treadmill, the hulks, and the colonies, and some to the gallows. We lived with the fear of these things, and not with the fear of God before our eyes." From such a training could we expect otherwise? The writer asks what business has society to persecute such as she: a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit; the unfortunate is the fruit, and society is the tree. p. 165

It is in vain that we reclaim the women. The only remedy—the only way to put down the social evil—is to reclaim the men.

MARK-LANE.

p. 166

On a Monday morning, especially on the Eastern Counties lines, the trains running into town have an unusually large number of passengers. They consist generally of the jolly-looking fellows who, at the time of the cattle show, take the town by storm, and fill every omnibus and cab, and dining room, and place of public amusement, and then as suddenly retire as if they were a Tartar horde, dashing into some rich and luxurious capital, then vanishing with their booty, none know whither. However, penetrate into Mark-lane, you may see them every Monday and Friday, smelling very strong of tobacco smoke—for, although smoking is absurdly and strictly prohibited on railways, it is a known fact that people will smoke nevertheless—and with the air of men who are not troubled about trifles, and have their pockets well lined with cash. These are the merchants and millers and maltsters of Mark-lane. p. 167 All England waits for their reports; their decisions affect the prices of grain at Chicago on one side, and far in the ports of the Black Sea on the other. Bread is the staff of life, and its traffic affects the weal or woe of empires. Prices low in Mark-lane, and in the garrets of London, in the cellars of Manchester, in the wynds of Edinburgh, there is joy. As we may suppose, the trade in grain is one of the most ancient in the world. There were corn merchants and millers long before Mark-lane was built. Originally the corn merchants of the metropolis assembled at a place called Bark's Quay, where now the Custom-house stands. Then they moved into Whitechapel, somewhere near Aldgate Church, and then the Corn Exchange in Mark-lane was built. Originally there was but one exchange, that erected in 1749, which is private property, and the money for which was raised in eighty hundred-pound shares; each share at this time being worth £1,300. This, I believe, is the only metropolitan market for corn, grain, and seeds. The market days are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; hours, ten to three. Wheat is paid for in bills at one month, and other corn and grain in bills at two months. p. 168 The Kentish hoymen, distinguishable by their sailors' jackets, have stands free of expense, and pay less for metage and dues than others, and the Essex dealers enjoy some privileges; in both cases said to be in consideration of the men of Kent and Essex having continued to supply the city when it was ravaged by the plague. Old Mark-lane consists of an open Doric colonnade, within which the factors have their stands. It resembles the atrium, or place of audience in the Pompeian house, with its impluvium, the place in the centre in which the rain fell. In this market, managed by a committee and secretary, there was no foreign competition. At this time there are about seventy-two stands, and more than a hundred subscribers of five guineas each. I believe the stands are from thirty to forty pounds a year. Now at one time this place was quite a close borough. There were more factors than the place could hold, and when a stand was vacant it was given to some poor broken-down man, who would not be likely to interfere with the jolly business which the rest were carrying on. The excluded were very indignant. They planted themselves in Mark-lane. They did business in the street outside the Exchange. p. 169 They were men of equal standing and respectability with any of the privileged; and after an immense amount of grumbling and growling, they did as most Englishmen would have done—went to Parliament, and got an Act to have a second Exchange erected side by side with the old one. This second erection was completed in 1826, and in the partition are now a couple of arches, which were placed there in order that, if at any time the old Exchange were amalgamated with the new—a consummation of which there seems no chance at present—the whole may be formed into one capacious market. The new Exchange has a central Grecian Doric portico, surmounted by imperial arms and agricultural emblems, the ends having corresponding pilasters. Here lightermen and granary-keepers have stands as well as corn merchants, factors, and millers. At the further end of this building there is a seed-market; nor is this all. Attached to the new Exchange is an hotel, in the upper room of which is an auction room for the sale of damaged cargoes; and on the other side—that is, above the old Exchange—is a subscription refreshment room, known as Jack's, where most of the Norfolk flour is sold, a great deal of it being paid for in ready money, p. 170 and then resold again downstairs, on the usual credit, the profit on such a transaction being the odd threepence or sixpence, which becomes a respectable sum if you buy or sell a thousand quarters. Up here are the millers or their agents in large quantities. "We are not," said one to the writer, "the rogues the world takes us for. If we don't sell good flour, the bakers can't sell their bread." Let us hope this is true; but in these days of universal

rascaldom, when gold, no matter how dishonestly acquired, makes its possessor an object of respect, and not of scorn, what wonder is it that we believe that there are rogues in grain as well as in other trades? In the middle of the old Exchange you will see an immense number of foreigners; these are Greeks, living all together in the neighbourhood of Finsbury-square, who are gradually getting all the foreign trade—what are our English merchants about?—of the country into their hands. It is the Greeks, not the English, who buy up the corn shipped from the ports of the Black Sea, and pour it into the English market. Besides these Greeks, you will see captains of vessels in great numbers waiting to hear if their cargoes are sold, and where they are to be taken. A busy scene is Mark-lane, especially on a Monday. The malt tax in 1857 was p. 171 £6,470,010, which represents an enormous amount of malt, of which a great part is sold in Mark-lane. In the year 1857 there were imported into the United Kingdom 3,473,957 quarters of wheat, 1,701,470 of barley, 1,710,299 of oats, 76,048 of rye, 159,899 of peas, 305,775 of beans, 1,150,783 of Indian corn, 188 of buck-wheat, and 2,763 of bere or bigg; and in the same year there were imported 2,184,176 cwts. of flour and meal. Then we must not forget the home produce, which is principally brought into London by ships, though a great deal of it comes up by rail. In London alone the consumption of wheat in the shape of flour and otherwise may be estimated at upwards of 1,600,000 quarters a year. But Mark-lane is not, like Smithfield, a market for London alone. On the contrary, it is attended by buyers from all parts of the country. The cargoes in the river sold at Mark-lane may be landed at Leith, or Glasgow, or Liverpool, or even in the distant ports of Cork, or Belfast, or Dublin. Well may there be a bustle in Mark-lane. At eleven the market commences, and at the various stands preparations are made for the business of the day by untying and placing on the stands little bags containing samples of every p. 172 conceivable species of grain eatable by man or beast. At the end of the day the floor is covered with the samples which the buyer, after rubbing over in his hands and inspecting, has thrown down. The sweepings are afterwards gathered up and sold, and realise, I believe, a very handsome sum in the course of the year. At half-past two a beadle rings a bell, and no more are permitted to enter the Exchange. Those that are there hastily finish their business, tie up their samples, swallow a chop, rush off to their respective termini, and in two or three hours are perhaps more than a hundred miles away. Mark-lane for the rest of the week is a dull, dirty lane, with but few passengers, and very dark and dull indeed.

Yet Mark-lane has its romances. Look around you; not a man perhaps but can tell you of enormous profits and enormous losses. The trade carried on here is of so speculative a character that but few realise money by it after all. Come to this stand. It was calculated the other day that the firm carrying on business here were losing at the rate of a thousand pounds per hour. Hear this factor: "I once bought some Windsor beans at an early hour in the morning at 32s. a p. 173 quarter, and sold them the same day at 64s." Yet our informant has been compelled to settle with his creditors. You may point to me a man who has not been reduced to this, but he is a *rara avis*, and he can tell you how, perhaps, another day or another hour would have made him a bankrupt. The rule is a crisis and a crash; not a disgraceful one—for the unlucky ones, many of them, manage to pay twenty shillings in the pound eventually—but a crisis and a temporary suspension. In some cases where a man has been in trade many years, and has accumulated a handsome fortune, one unlucky speculation scatters it all, and compels him—old, and destitute of the energy of youth—to begin business again. This is hard, but it cannot be helped. Men who have been on the Exchange long can tell you funny stories of how they came at seven in the morning and cleared handsome sums of money before they went home to breakfast, and broke all the laws against regrating and forestalling which the thoughtful stupidity of our ancestors had devised—in order that bread, the staff of life, might not be high in price—on a most royal scale. We do not hear of such things now, nor do the mobs of London now break into the Quaker p. 174 Chapels to see if the flour is hidden there—an amiable weakness to which the mob was much given towards the end of the last century, when wheat was at famine prices, and the loaf was cheap at two and tenpence. We are fallen upon better days, upon days of free trade, when the English artisan, in order that bread may be cheap, has his emissaries and agents scouring all parts of the old world and the new.

PREACHING AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

p. 175

In that celebrated chapter in which Gibbon explains the rise and progress on natural grounds of the Christian religion, it has always seemed to us that he has not done justice to the immense influence which the institution of the pulpit must originally have possessed. Had he gone no further than the pages of his New Testament, the distinguished historian would have found many an instance of oratorical success. He would have read how Herod quailed before the rude orator who in the desert drew multitudes to hear him as he proclaimed the advent of the Messiah, and warned a generation of vipers to flee from the wrath to come; he would have read how, whilst the Teacher spake as never man spake, the common people heard him gladly; how Felix trembled in his pride and power, and how the polished intellect of Athens listened, and admired, and believed, while Paul preached of an unknown God. It is true that in a subsequent chapter Gibbon p. 176 does not altogether ignore the pulpit, and admits the sacred orators possessed some advantages over the advocate or the tribune. "The arguments and rhetoric of the latter," he writes, "were instantly opposed with equal arms by skilful and resolute antagonists, and the cause of truth and reason might derive an accidental support from the conflict of hostile passions. The bishop, or

some distinguished presbyter to whom he cautiously delegated the powers of preaching, harangued without the danger of interruption or reply a submissive multitude whose minds had been prepared and subdued by the awful ceremonies of religion. Such was the strict subordination of the Roman Catholic Church, that the same concerted sounds might issue at once from a hundred pulpits of Italy or Egypt, if they were *tuned* by the master hand of the Roman or Alexandrian bishop." But much more than this may be said. Wonderful is the power of oratory. Gibbon may have under-rated it, for we know that he never could summon up the requisite courage to make a speech in Parliament; but nevertheless rare power is his, who can speak what will touch the hearts, and form the opinion, and mould the lives of men. The more unlettered be p. 177 the age, the more triumphant will be this power; and when the theme is the stupendous one of religion—when in it, according to the belief of preacher and hearer, eternal interests are involved—woe that shall never pass away—joy that shall never die—when, moreover, this living appeal is put in the place of dead form or dreary routine, what wonder is it that before it should fade away the pagan faith of Greece or Rome? The pulpit and Christianity are identical. In times of reformation and revival, the pulpit has ever been a power. When spiritual darkness has come down upon the land—when the oracles have been dumb—when the sacred fire on the altar has ceased to burn, the pulpit has been a form, a perquisite, a sham, rather than a message of peace and glad tidings to the weary and heavy laden.

How comes it to pass that in these days the pulpit of the Establishment has failed to be this? Mr. Christmas, a clergyman of the Established Church, in a volume recently published, seeks to answer this question. To use his own language, "the author had long felt that through some cause or other the Church had not secured that hold on the attention of the multitude without p. 178 which her ministration could be but partially effective." Why, even in these few lines we see a reason of the failure which Mr. Christmas mourns. Clergymen live in a world of their own, and will not look at facts as worldly men are compelled to do. Now, as a matter of fact, the Church of England is not the church, but merely a section of the church; and yet you cannot go into an episcopalian place of worship but you hear what the church says—what the church holds—what the church commands—when common sense tells every one that the speaker is merely referring to the Establishment in England, and that even if he were appealing to the custom and tradition of that body of believers which, in all countries and ages, constitutes the church, the inquiry is of little consequence after all—the appeal, in reality, being to the Bible, and the Bible alone, which, in the well-worn language of Chillingworth, is the religion of Protestants. Thus is it so much preaching in the Church of England fails to reach and attract the masses. The ministers will deal in fictions—will exclaim, "Hear the church"—will wander away from topics of human interest into p. 179 questions with which the educated (and still more the uneducated) mind has no sympathy. The middle-class public go to hear—for it is the genteel thing to go to church—but they sit silent, passive, exhausted by the long preliminary service, wearied, and unmoved. What wonder is it that the more independent and manly—the men who do not fear Mrs. Grundy—who are not afraid of conventionalisms, either stop at home, or leave the Establishment for the more living service of dissent? Mr. Christmas observes:—"Few will venture to say that the style of preaching most valued among nonconformists is inferior to that heard from the pulpits of the Establishment." The reason is not far to seek: dissent has no ancient prestige to plead; dissent has no rich endowment to fall back on; dissent lives on and is strong in spite of the cold shade of aristocracy, or of the sneer of the bigot or the fool; dissent depends upon the pulpit. If that be weak and cold, and dull and dim, dissent melts like snow beneath the warm breath of the south. Dissent reminds us more than the Establishment of the earlier period of Christianity, of the Carpenter's Son who had not where to lay his head; whose apostles were fishermen, and whose kingdom, to use His p. 180 own emphatic declaration, "was not of this world." The public mind is shocked and estranged when it hears the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he did the other day, defending a recent ecclesiastical appointment, on the plea that the fortunate individual was a man of blameless life, of high family, and great wealth. "Mr. A. B.," says Mr. Christmas, "must be a clergyman, and Mr. A. B. has not the gift of utterance. Well, he will be able to read his sermons, and the rest of his brethren do the like. It is no detriment to a man's prospects that the church is half empty when he preaches. 'He is a very learned man—or a very well connected man—or a very good man—or an excellent parish priest: it is a pity he is not more successful in the pulpit; but then, really, preaching is the smallest part of a clergyman's duty.'" Such is the way in which such a subject is treated within the pale of the Establishment.

But the Sunday Evening Service at St. Paul's Cathedral is an answer to all this. Let us see! On a cold winter evening, underneath its magnificent dome, are seated some three thousand well-dressed people. On the first occasion of holding evening service, the scene was rather p. 181 indecorous for Sunday evening. A large number of those who had been unable to obtain admission to the service were lingering about the south door, and as the carriages of the Lord Mayor and other civic dignitaries were leaving with their occupants, the assembled crowd gave vent to their feelings by unmistakable groans of displeasure, as if they considered themselves to have been unfairly excluded. But this is over—the thing has become a fact. The audience has toned down to the level English standard of propriety. The sublime service, in spite of its length and monotony, has been listened to with a patience almost devout; and the choir, "200 trebles and altos, 150 tenors, and 150 basses," the largest and most complete choir that was ever yet organised, has done its part to heighten the rapture and piety of the night. A clergyman now ascends the pulpit to preach. He is a popular clergyman—the crowd to-night is larger than it has ever yet been—active, learned, industrious, charitable, devout. He is the Rev. Canon Dale, rector of St. Pancras. Yet what is his theme? The Church—the Mother of us all—the divinely appointed means of man's recovery from the power and the consequence of sin. Is not this a fatal blunder? p. 182

What man wants is, not the Church, but the message it proclaims—the voice itself, not the messenger—the good tidings of great joy, not the human instruments by which they are revealed to man.

But this service shows the strength of the church in the metropolis. The reply to this, we fear, is unsatisfactory. The present able Bishop of London is endeavouring to procure a union of the City churches. The answers to the inquiries of the bishop made by the clergy present some curious features. The Rev. J. Charlesworth, rector of the joint parishes of St. Mildred, Bread-street, and St. Margaret Moses, replies in answer to the bishop's interrogatories that the largest attendance at any of his church services is ten, that his net income is £220 a year, and that the population is 258. The Rev. J. Minchin, rector of the joint parishes of St. Mildred, Poultry, and St. Mary, Colechurch, reports that the largest attendance at his service is 30, his net income £280, and the population 600. The Rev. Thomas Darling, rector of St. Michael Paternoster Royal and St. Martin's Vintry, reports that his largest attendance is 25, his net income £240, population 430. p. 183 The Rev. Dr. Kynaston, high master of St. Paul's School, reports that the attendance at the church of the joint parishes of St. Nicholas Cole Abbey and St. Nicholas Olave, of which he is rector, is 30, his income £263, with a house in good repair, population 592. The Rev. Charles Mackenzie, rector of the joint parishes of St. Benet, Gracechurch, and St. Leonard, Eastcheap, states the attendance at 48, net income £287, population 300. The Rev. Dr. Stebbing, rector of St. Mary Somerset and St. Mary Woolchurch Haw, reports that his largest attendance is 40, net income £250, population unknown. The Rev. Thomas Jones, rector of Allhallows, Lombard-street, reports that his largest attendance is 50, his net income £396, population 456. The Rev. F. J. Stainforth, incumbent of Allhallows Staining, reports that his largest attendance is 50, net income £800, population 500. Many more of the same sort might be given from the official returns, and in some cases there is an attendance of 100 or 150 persons where the income of the incumbent is upwards of £1,000 a year.

One reason of this wretched state of things we have hinted at. The removal of the city population, we may be told, is another: p. 184 but the population in the neighbourhood of these places is sufficient to fill them were the population given to church-going. With all due deference, we would fain ask the clergy if they do not fail to attract the public, owing to their themes and manner of treating them? Some preachers always manage to bring in the Old Testament dispensation. The preacher is dwelling among the priests and Levites: perpetually he tells you what the Jews did and did not; how they were a stiff-necked people; how they went after strange gods; how their nation was blotted out, and their temple razed to the ground, and their very name became a reproach. Man needs not the Hebrew learning, but the Christian faith; not the voice that thundered from Sinai, but the accents of mercy that were heard on Calvary in that awful hour when the earth trembled, when the grave gave up its dead, when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, and the Son of Man died upon the cross. The preacher of the class we have referred to almost seems to think otherwise: he ignores the present, and lives only in the past. He is worse than a lawyer with his precedents. His dialect is obsolete, and a stumbling-block to active, earnest, intelligent living men, whether rich or poor. p. 185 He is like a man with corks, who is afraid to cut them off, and strike out boldly for himself. He cannot ask you for a penny for a new church without showing how liberally the Jews supported the public worship of their day. He is great in Deuteronomy and Leviticus. He seems as if he could have no faith in Christianity unless he could lock it up with Old Testament texts. "I fear," writes Erasmus, in his "Age of Religious Revolution," "two things—that the study of Hebrew will promote Judaism, and that the study of philology will revive Paganism." Really we sometimes are inclined to believe that the first fear has been realised. Many a preacher reminds us of Bishop Corbett's "Distracted Puritan," when he says—

> "In the blessed tongue of Canaan
>   I placed my chiefest pleasure,
> 'Till I prick'd my foot with a Hebrew root,
>   And it bled beyond all measure."

We can well imagine many a preacher thus speaking, and feel disposed to wish that such might prick their feet with Hebrew roots till they wholly discontinue their references to extinct forms of worship, and apply the truth that Christ came to preach to man's present position—to the hopes p. 186 and fears—to the struggles and duties—to the passions and vanities of to-day. There is progress everywhere. Why should preaching be the exception? If, as is admitted, the eloquence of the bar or senate has declined, may we not naturally conclude that in that of the pulpit there has been a falling off as well, especially when we remember how much the press has supplemented the latter? Verily, the clergy, whether in or out of the Establishment, must exert themselves. The nation demands that the enormous wealth and patronage possessed by the latter be devoted to something more than refined enjoyment or epicurean ease. It is not churches we want, but parsons. An orator can preach anywhere, as well from an old tub as from a pulpit, costly and consecrated, and curiously wrought.

p. 187

AN OMNIBUS YARD.

In one of the remotest of the Fejee Islands some Wesleyan missionaries, in the year 1851, landed

a pair of horses. We read general excitement prevailed at the towns near, and a great muster gathered on the beach at the day of landing. It was long before the native mind got reconciled to the phenomenon. The people, we are told, were terrified if approached by a horse. They would jump into the river, run up cocoa-nut and other trees, and climb houses for safety while the animal passed their place. In England this stage of terror has long been passed, and horses themselves are gradually giving place to steam.

Nevertheless, for short traffic—for transit to places where the snort of the steam engine will never be heard—for crooked ways inimical to machinery—for the convenience of those who like to be taken up and set down at their own doors—for the comfort of the nervous, whose firm belief is, that for the regular railway traveller a fatal smash is only a question of time, the London p. 188 omnibus is a permanent institution. It is difficult to perceive how people managed before it had an existence—when the fare from Highbury to the Bank was a shilling, and when the traveller for the journey from Highgate to London, along the dreary wastes of Holloway, paid no less than half-a-crown, and when even for that exorbitant sum, as it would now be deemed, you had no chance of a trip unless you had booked your place. In those times happy—yea, thrice happy—were the fathers of families living beyond the sound of Bow bells. In these, how can a man help going to the bad, rise he ever so early, or sit he up ever so late, eat he ever so of the bread of carefulness, if mamma and daughters can ride from the furthest suburbs—from remote Peckham or airy Paddington—for the ridiculously small sum of sixpence, or even less, in a vehicle as luxuriously fitted up as a private carriage, to the shops so tempting to the female mind of the fashionable and dissipated West? Happily the evil is tending to cure itself. The ladies have acquired a mode of dressing which simply renders, in the majority of cases, the use of an omnibus an impossibility.

p. 189 The date of the London omnibus is not ancient. Mr. Shillibeer, in his evidence before the Board of Health, stated that on July 7th, 1829, he started the first pair of omnibuses in the metropolis, from the Bank to the Yorkshire Stingo, New-road, copied from Paris, where omnibuses had been established in 1819, by M. Lafitte, the banker. Each omnibus was drawn by three horses abreast, had no outside passengers, and carried twenty-two inside. Now the same distance is traversed by omnibuses carrying twenty-four passengers—twelve inside and twelve out—and drawn by two horses, for sixpence. At one time the passengers were provided with periodicals—a custom that would be quite superfluous when for a penny the traveller can get all the day’s news. Shillibeer’s first conductors were two sons of British naval officers, who were succeeded by young men in velvet liveries. Shillibeer met with the usual fate of those who labour for the public, and was ruined; but the system he introduced has expanded with the growth of London, and has reached a gigantic extent. One company alone—the General Omnibus Company—a company which has effected a thorough reform in the omnibus service, and deserves the thanks of the public, had, in p. 190 the first half year of the year 1858, 602 omnibuses running, travelling in the half-year 5,815,036 miles, and carrying 16,800,000 passengers, and pays Government a duty of £4,000 a month. As their yard in Highbury is the largest of the kind, let me conduct the reader thither.

On the main Islington road, not far from Highbury-corner, just opposite Union Chapel, there is a stable-yard, at the entrance of which there are generally two or three ’buses changing horses; a board over it denotes that it is the stabling of the London General Omnibus Company. If we go up that yard we shall find that we are in a vast square, occupying nearly twenty acres of ground, and running as far back as the Liverpool-road. To the right of us are enormous stables, each stable containing forty horses, all comfortably bedded down in straw, resting after their labours, and recruiting their strength for fresh ones. The horses do not work too hard, not more than three hours out of the twenty-four, and consume daily 18 lbs. of corn and 10 lbs. of chaff. To each omnibus—with the exception of the few drawn by three horses, which have a dozen—there p. 191 are ten horses attached—which are never changed—which are all numbered, and the fullest particulars of which are entered in a book kept by the active and intelligent foreman of the yard. There is a horse-keeper to each set, who knows the times of his omnibus, and acts accordingly. In the middle of the yard is an immense shed, under which the omnibuses are drawn at night and washed and cleaned for the next day. This washing is done very easily. An enormous tank, holding 27,000 gallons of water, supplies several tubs, against which each omnibus is placed. There is a watchman, who comes on at nine at night and receives the omnibuses as they come in, and ranges them in the order in which, on the following morning, they will commence their respective exits. At half-past seven the first omnibus leaves the yard; the next follows eight minutes afterwards, and so on all the rest of the day. The omnibuses that commence early, finish their day’s work about nine. Those who go on duty later wait and bring home the pleasure-seekers returning from the theatres and exhibitions, and other places of public resort. For the accommodation of these latter classes extra omnibuses are required. Some of the omnibuses, we p. 192 must add, work early and late; but then they have a good rest in the middle of the day. It is a hard life, that of an omnibus—citizens are apt to get fat, and stones are very trying. At a considerable expense, every ’bus must be done up and repainted and revarnished every two years. The original cost of each ’bus is about £120. They are all built in the yard, of iron and good oak and ash. In one part of the premises there is a steam-engine at work, sawing wood and turning machinery. In another part there are ’buses in all stages of development—here a frame, there a complete body, and there one with wheels waiting for the varnish, and paint and velvet cushions and plate glass, which shall make it differ from what it now is, as does Sappho

> “At her toilette’s greasy task,
> With Sappho fragrant at an evening mask.”

But let us return to the horses. We have spoken of those in good health and in active work. Some of them are really capital cattle; and I was shown a pair of chestnuts worth at least a hundred pounds. p. 193 We will now proceed to the infirmary, just premising that in so enormous a yard every precaution is taken against disease. A man is constantly at work whitewashing the stables. This takes him four months, and by the time he has done he has to commence anew. The infirmary consists of a series of roomy, brick stables, very warm and snug, where the dumb animals are treated more tenderly than many Christians. In another part there is a large inclosure, more than half covered, but open on one side for the recovery of the horses, who, having nothing particularly the matter with them, but who have lived too fast or worked too much, require a month or two of rest. The aged and the incurable are drafted off and sent to the repository, and sold for a few pounds. Let me add, even these horses continue their philanthropic career. No longer engaged in conveying the verdant youth of the metropolis to business or pleasure, they drag greens from door to door. The shoeing forge is close by. The physicking and shoeing is taken by contract, by one man. He must have enough to do, as in this yard and the one close by are generally a thousand horses. The food, prepared by steam, is ground at the depôt in Bell-lane.

p. 194 Now for a word about the men. There are about three hundred in the Highbury yard. The coachmen have six shillings, the conductors four shillings a day, and are paid daily. The horse-keepers have a guinea a week. The artisans employed in the carriage department earn from thirty to fifty shillings a week. There are two sick clubs, one for the coachmen and conductors, who pay sixpence a week, and receive when ill fourteen shillings a week—and one for the horse-keepers, who pay threepence a week, and receive when on the sick list ten shillings weekly. On Sunday evening Divine Service is held in the harness-room, fitted up for that purpose. This was commenced by Sir Horace St. Paul. Once a year a grand tea-meeting is held, at which all the servants of the company, with their wives and families, are present, and addresses are delivered by Sir Horace St. Paul, Mr. Hanbury, M.P., and other philanthropists; and for those who wish to improve a leisure hour, a small reading-room is opened, access to which may be had on the payment of a penny weekly. On the table are some newspapers and illustrated periodicals, and thus not only is a little mental stimulus provided, but the men are not driven to spend their money in a public-house. This is a feature of the yard which cannot be too highly commended, p. 195 and which I am sure if it were known the general public would be happy to support. The men are satisfied, I think. One of them I had known in better days seemed glad to have secured a berth as a driver. One informed me that he had £100, which he had told his Missus to draw out of the savings bank and place in the custody of the Royal British; but his Missus was obstinate, and her obstinacy saved the cash. Some of the men are teetotallers, and those who wish to attend church or chapel on the Sunday can do so. It is an advantage in a great company that it cannot resort to the little meanness and persecution of which a single proprietor may be guilty. The latter may underpay his servants, keep them at work all day, or take every advantage of them in every possible way. But if a great company does this, the public cries shame. But we must be off. Once more we find ourselves in the road; a ’bus comes up—we climb the roof—we have seen baronets and M.P.’s get inside; an opposition ’bus is behind; “All right!” cries the conductor. Merrily we rush on, exclaiming mentally—

> “Ore favete omnes et tempora cingite ramis.”

p. 196 As a contrast, let me quote the following from Miss Meteyard’s essay on the history and present condition of the Metropolitan omnibus drivers and conductors, published in Cassell’s “Working Man’s Friend and Family Instructor,” in 1850. Our readers will see that in the last few years a great and desirable change has been made. Miss Meteyard says:—“As we have said, 11,000 individuals are connected with the omnibus labour of the metropolis. Of these, 6,000 are drivers and conductors, who work on an average rather more than sixteen hours a day; namely, from before eight o’clock in the morning till after twelve o’clock at night. The labour connected with railway omnibuses is still severer than this, being twenty hours each third day, and fourteen on alternate ones. Nor does the seventh day bring rest, as in most laborious occupations; work goes on in precisely the same manner; and, as on some lines of road, the traffic is greater on Sundays than on other days, the work is so far heavier. During the number of hours the men are employed they *have no rest*. The driver never leaves his box, except during a few occasional minutes whilst his horses are changed; p. 197 and he has, therefore, to take his meals during these periods, and usually upon the coach-box, as, where the men have wives and families, some member of them may be often seen handing up the tea or dinner in a can or basket. As the married portion of these men universally say, they ‘never see their children except as they may look at them in bed;’ and as for home, in its commonly-received sense, or of any of the moral duties connected with it, the one is unknown, and the other is impossible. The case of the conductors is precisely the same, neither having a day’s rest for months together, for if they take one they have to pay a substitute; and in many cases the proprietors object to a day’s relaxation, and will not hire men who need or may ask for it, such being against the laws of their particular association. For a loss of time they are fined 2s. 6d., and for a second or third offence, suspended from a week’s employment, or else dismissed. Against stringent rules of this kind we should take no objection, were the hours of labour in any degree of reasonable length; in that case, stringency would be doubly effective, both as regarded the interest of the proprietary and public convenience.”

p. 198 “Looking at this preposterous amount of daily labour, and the evils which, directly and indirectly, must flow therefrom, in relation to pauperism, crime, and a low average of life, we should expect to find omnibus labour highly remunerated. Yet such is not the case. On some roads the drivers

receive no more than from twelve to fifteen shillings for the work of seven days; and out of this they are compelled by their employers to pay six shillings weekly as beer-money to horse-keepers and stable-keepers. Of course, with wages at so low a par, and so much reduced by outgoings, men would scarcely be found willing to undertake this week's work of a hundred and twelve hours, unless each driver were allowed, as is the case, the privilege of an outside passenger, on the box beside him, each distance he drives, whether the fare be sixpence or threepence. Each driver drives ten or twelve distances per day, each distance to and fro being about six miles; and thus, in fine weather, when the generality of male passengers prefer the outside, and the coach-box is sure of an occupant, the driver's perquisites may mount up to a fair weekly sum. But in wet and bad weather the case is very different, and these men drive the whole day through p. 199 without a single passenger. This may possibly account for the variable temper of omnibus-drivers, who, reversing the ordinary process of things, are surly in fine, and courteous in wet weather, and, caring nothing for patronage whilst the sun shines, grow civil in times of frost and rain, and proffer, with parental solicitude, cape, wrapper, and apron.

"Though acting in a more responsible capacity, the conductors, unlike the drivers, are only daily servants, and liable, and often subject to, dismissal, at a moment's notice. Men once thus dismissed are rarely employed as conductors again, it being a rule with these combined proprietors never to employ a man in this capacity who has acted as conductor in any previous situation."

p. 200

THE NEW CATTLE MARKET.

The London public are not of the opinion of Shelley, that flesh of bullocks and sheep, when properly cooked, is the true cause of original sin, and that to regain the innocence of the Garden of Eden we have but to have recourse solely to a vegetarian diet. This doctrine has never been a popular one, and from the earliest time the contrary has found favour in the eyes of men. With what gusto does Homer describe the banquets before the walls of Troy, when heroes were the guests, and where divine Achilles was the head cook! The custom of eating baked and boiled is one of the few good things we have to thank antiquity for. Our jolly Scandinavian forefathers considered eating horse rump steak a sign of orthodox paganism; and at this very moment, if the *Times* be a correct index of the national sentiment, the great question that agitates the mind of the middle class public, that public in which, according to general opinion, all the piety, and p. 201 patriotism, and wisdom of the land is concentrated, is not as to peace or war—not as to Reform or Social Science—or education or religion—not as to how the vice and impiety of the day may be grappled with and reclaimed—but as to how a man may genteelly dine his friends, and, with an income of a few hundreds, provide a repast that shall rival that of one whose income consists of as many thousands. Really, the force of folly can no further go. Hence, then, it is clear that to the present customs of society a cattle-market of some kind is essential. At one time it was held in Smithfield. There it was a dangerous nuisance. The wise men of London did as they generally do in such matters—first denied that it was a nuisance at all, and when they were driven from that position, and compelled to yield to public indignation, moved it a little further off.

It is early morn, and we wend our way to the New Cattle-market, in Holloway, near the model gaol, and lying in that *terra incognita* stretching away to Camden-town and the steep of Highgate-hill, where juvenile cockneys some thirty years ago played, and called the waste Copenhagen-fields. There the New Cattle-market is erected. In shape it consists of a long p. 202 square, if I may be allowed such an expression, on every side surrounded with lofty walls, and covers many acres of ground. In the centre of the market is a lofty clock-tower, and around it are shops devoted to the sale of horse gear and cattle-physic, and the banking-houses, where the cattle are paid for and the money deposited, chief amongst which is that of an active alderman of the city of London, and ex-Lord Mayor and M.P. The animals are ranged in pairs, others tied to rails all around; and on the other side are layers, where the animals that are not sold are lodged on payment of a trifling sum, and slaughtering-houses. The salesmen, who are the middle-men, receive the cattle from the drover, and sell them to the butcher, and pay the money into the bank. The extent of the market is about ten acres. The market is the property of the Corporation, who exact a toll of 3½d. for each beast, and 4d. a score of sheep; then there is a further charge of 1s. a pen. As there are 1,800 pens and 1,450 rails, this rent must amount to a respectable sum. In round numbers, the accommodation provided is for 25,000 sheep and 7,300 beasts. The summer is the best time for seeing the market, as in the winter months it is not so p. 203 numerously attended. The market opens at two, A.M., and closes at two, P.M. Any buying and selling after that hour is most strictly prohibited. The entrance into the market is not open, as in Smithfield, but through iron gates, guarded by vigilant police. The public-houses in the neighbourhood abound in signs not known in more fashionable districts. Here is the "Butchers' Arms," there the "White Horse;" here the "Lamb" Tavern, there the "Red Lion;" and great is the business they do on Mondays and Thursdays. The men are of a class not visible elsewhere in London. Farmers, graziers, jockeys, jobbers, pig-drivers, salesmen, drovers abound here, whose speciality is to know

> "Quæ cura bovum, qui cultus habendo,
> Sit pecori."

However early you may come in the morning, you may be sure they are there before you. At twelve o'clock on Sunday night the Sunday is supposed to be over, and the poor beasts, who have been shut up ever since twelve on Saturday night, are released from their confinement. Now comes the difficulty and confusion. p. 204 How can the beasts belonging to one man be prevented from mixing with those of another? How can they be got into proper order? I fear the answer must be chiefly by a system of terrorism and physical force. Those wonderfully sagacious brutes the drovers' dogs know every animal, know where he is to go, know where he ought not to go, and take care that, somehow or other, the object aimed at by the defunct Administrative Reform Association should be achieved, and that the right one should be in the right place. Of a night the scene is something extraordinary. The lowing of oxen, the tremulous cries of the sheep, the barking of dogs, the rattling of sticks on the bodies and heads of the animals, the rough and ragged appearance of the men, the shouts of the drovers, and the flashing about of torches, present altogether a wild and terrific combination. But all this is over by daylight, when the buyers come upon the scene, and there is an appearance of order and cleanliness, a strong contrast to Smithfield, as your eye glances from one row to another of heads gathered from Northamptonshire, from Leicestershire, from Scotland, from Ireland, from the fertile plains of far-away Holstein, or the pastures of Spain, still more remote. p. 205 The latter animals it seems almost a pity to slaughter; they have something of the appearance of the buffalo, minus his shaggy head of horrid hair; they are cream-coloured, and with their long horns must be a very pretty ornament for a gentleman's park. Our foreign trade in cattle is growing very large. In the year 1857 there were imported into the United Kingdom, oxen and bulls, 53,277; cows, 12,371; calves, 27,315; sheep, 162,324; lambs, 14,883; swine, 10,678. The greater proportion come from Holland and Denmark, and are put upon the rail and at once sent off to London. There was a time when we were told this would be the ruin of the farmer; yet, according to the speech of Mr. Grey, a north country agriculturist, the other day, it appears that growing flesh is the most remunerative employment for the farmer at the present time; and in spite of all this foreign importation, we may observe that meat is high, and that Paterfamilias, blessed, as he is sure to be, with a small income and a large family, finds it difficult to make both ends meet. The returns of the cattle-markets tell us that the population of London consume annually 277,000 bullocks, 30,000 calves, 1,480,000 sheep, and 34,000 pigs. p. 206 Mr. Hicks estimates the value of these at between seven and eight millions sterling. The buyers here are the larger class of dealers; the smaller ones go to the dead-meat market in Newgate-street, which is blocked up by them from four in the morning till breakfast-time. If we come here on a Friday, between ten and four, we shall find a market for the sale of horses and donkeys—a market much patronised by costermongers. Let us add, in conclusion, that the New Cattle-market bids fair to be as much of a nuisance as the old, and that, sooner or later, there must be a dead-meat market for London, and that alone; otherwise we shall have a repetition of the sad tragedy to which the poet refers, when he writes of "the cow with the crumpled horn, who tossed the maiden all forlorn."

THE GOVERNMENT OFFICE

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Is in the Strand—or in Westminster—and the contrast between its silence and stillness and the bustle of the streets is something wonderful. You feel as you enter as if you were in a charmed land. With Tennyson's lotus-eaters you exclaim, "There is no joy but calm. Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?" Charles Lamb's description of the South Sea House might have been penned for a Government Office. The place seems to belong not to the living present. The windows, double glazed, keep out the roar of the outside world. The chairs and tables, of massive mahogany, seem as if of the time of the ancients. The Turkey carpet has a smack of the primitive political Eden, ere man sinned, and Lord John Russell introduced his Reform Bill. This may be a railroad age, but it is not in a Government Office that that truth is recognised. The young men are generally reading the papers, or eating lunch; p. 208 the seniors are doing the same, but in a more dignified manner. In an office where there are several, to find a couple at real hard work from ten till four is, I fear, a rarity.

According to Mr. Knight, when Henry VIII. had stripped Wolsey of Whitehall, and other possessions, he constructed there, for the amusement of his leisure, a tennis-court, a bowling-green, and a cock-pit. The tennis-court and the bowling-green have left no traces. The cockpit went through a variety of transmutations, till it settled down into a treasury. In the reign of Anne, the lord high treasurer Godolphin sat three or four times a week at the cock-pit, "to determine and settle matters relating to the public treasure and revenues." This was the old building fronting the banqueting house, which Mr. Barry has recently metamorphosed into a magnificent wing of his uniform edifice. The old office of Godolphin, however, is but a small part of the modern treasury. The offices of the more important functionaries are in the large building behind, which fronts the esplanade in St. James's Park. Several offices were destroyed in 1733, in order to erect the present building facing the parade, p. 209 the expense of which was estimated at £9,000. The façade consists of a double basement of the Doric order, and a projection in the centre, on which are four Ionic pillars supporting an entablature and pediment.

Where the treasury of the kings of England had its abiding place—or, more properly, where its *eidolon* or Platonic idea lodged, before it took up its abode in the cock-pit—were hard to say. The exchequer, which in the reign of Edward I. was literally the king's strong box, was, in his time, lodged in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey. Sir Francis Palgrave says, that the earliest place of

deposit for the royal treasures which can be traced is "that very ancient apartment, described as the 'Treasure in the cloisters of the Abbey in Westminster, next the Chapter-house,' and in which the pix is still contained. This building is a vaulted chamber, supported by a single pillar; and it must remain with the architectural antiquary to decide why a structure in the early Romanesque style, ranging with the massy semicircular arch in the south transept, acknowledged to be a portion of the structure raised by the Confessor, may not also have been erected in the reign of the last legitimate Anglo-Saxon king. In this treasury the regalia and crown jewels were p. 210 deposited, as well as the records. The ancient double oak doors, strongly grated and barred with iron, and locked with three keys, yet remain."

The theory of the British treasury was much the same during the nomad period of its existence that it has continued to be in its settled and citizen-like life. There was from the beginning a treasurer, whose office it was to devise schemes for raising money, to manage the royal property to the best advantage, and to strike out the most economical and efficient modes of expenditure. He had even then the control of all the officers employed in collecting the customs and royal revenues, the disposal of offices in the customs throughout the kingdom, the nomination of escheators in the counties, and the leasing of crown lands. Then, as a check upon the malversion of this officer, there was the exchequer, the great conservator of the revenues of the nation. "The exchequer," said Mr. Ellis, clerk of the pells, when examined before the finance commissioners, "is at least coeval with the Norman Conquest, and has been from its earliest institution looked to as a check upon the lord high treasurer, and a protection for the king, as well as for the subject, in the custody, payment, and issue of the public money." p. 211

This is still the broad outline of the treasury—of the finance department of the State of Great Britain. The enormous magnitude of the empire has caused the subordinate departments of customs, the mint, &c., to expand until they have attained an organisation, an individual importance, a history of their own. The different modes of transacting money-business, rendered necessary by its greater amount and more complicated nature, have altered the routine both of the treasury and the exchequer; the changed relations of king and parliament have subjected the treasury and exchequer to new control and superintendence. Still their mutual relations, and the part they play in the economy of the empire, remain essentially the same as in older times.

The lords commissioners of the treasury (for the office of lord high treasurer has for many years been put in commission) have their office at Whitehall, in the building whose history we have briefly traced. The exchequer, or more properly "the receipt of exchequer," has its office at Whitehall Yard. But we must not descend to particulars. The only place in the wide world where p. 212 change comes not—where the main object seems to be how not to do it—where antiquated routine has its stronghold—is a government office.

Those of our readers who have read—and who has not?—Captain Marryatt's graphic descriptions of seafaring life, entitled "The King's Own," will remember the scene in which Captain Capperbar ingeniously manages to supply, from the ship's stores, all his own and her ladyship's domestic wants. The ship's carpenters are engaged in framing chests of drawers, and building dining-tables. Fully aware of the mischievous effects of idleness, the captain's lady finds employment for the ship's painters in her attics. The armourers, instead of preparing the murderous weapons of war, are peacefully occupied in making rakes and hoes for the especial benefit of the junior members of the same devoted family. Does the fair spouse of the gallant captain need even a pole for the clothes-line, a boat-mast is immediately dedicated to that important service. Thus, the captain turns his devotion for his country to some account; and if his patriotism be a virtue, it is one that brings with it its own reward.

p. 213 Granting, which we readily do, that the above scene is an exaggeration, still we believe it to be nearer the mark than the opposite representations, which would lead us to believe that all persons in the employ of Government are overworked and underpaid. Their places are sinecures; bread for life. Every merchant or employer of labour has the power of instant dismissal; but in Government offices this great check on idleness and stupidity is ignored. Officials are happy fellows. The ills of life do not affect them. Mills may stop, panics may take place, commerce may decline, ships may rot in deserted harbours; docks and warehouses, once teeming with busy life, may be silent as the grave—but their income knows no change, save when death causes a general promotion in their ranks. The agricultural mind may be weighed down with grief—it may find its idols but clay. There, where it must live, or bear no life, it may find all hollow, delusive, and false. The seasons may be unpropitious. The common ills farmers are heir to, such as potato disease, the fly at the turnips, the rot in the sheep, may be theirs in no common degree; nevertheless, the Clapham omnibus duly deposits at the Treasury in Downing-street Mr. Smith, p. 214 who, with the exception of two hours for lunch, and another hour or so for miscellaneous conversation, and the perusal of the *Times*, will, from ten till four, magnanimously devote himself to his country's good. At the hour of four, Mr. Smith is again on the omnibus, about to seek, in the bosom of his family, that relaxation which, did his country deny him, it would be ungrateful indeed. Mr. Smith is a family man; and, regardless of London temptations, he hastens to his mutton at five. On the contrary, the junior clerk, Mr. Adolphus Blaser, is a young man about town; and just as Mr. Smith retires to his night's rest, our young *roué*, having recovered from the effects of a good dinner, is ready to commence the diversions, or, as they may be more fitly termed, the follies of a night. At a good old age Mr. Smith is gathered to his fathers, and a tombstone in Norwood Cemetery calls upon the public to admire those virtues, the loss of which has left such a blank in the Clapham annals of domestic life. One of Mr. Smith's companions, a much-maligned individual, has just written to the *Times*, indignantly asking if it be nothing to

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attend every day at Somerset-house, in wet weather or fine? But, upon the whole, we think few men were more fortunate than our deceased friend. Like many of his schoolfellows, he did not make and lose a fortune; his hair did not become prematurely grey. There were storms, but they never reached him. He never missed his church: he had always a friend, and a bottle to give him; for your true Church and King man is generally reared on fine old port. His sons were placed in his office; and his daughters (good-looking, as most of the daughters of well-to-do, jolly old gentlemen, generally are) settle comfortably in life. And so endeth the chapter.

If this imaginary sketch be not true, it is not far from the truth. A Government situation is known to be a pleasant berth, and is jumped at as a man would jump at a freehold estate or a lump of Californian gold. A man who has any influence with the powers that be, or a younger son, instead of trying a trade or profession, will often seek a Government situation, trusting, with the income arising from it, he may live in town almost in idleness—at any rate in comparative luxury and ease. By the side of a Rothschild he may be poor, but really he is not so badly off, after all. The life of a Government *employé* is considered gentlemanly, easy, and not under-paid. Hence p. 216 the doors of those who have places to dispose of are furiously besieged by an eager and avaricious mob. The higher offices are equally greedily seized, and equally as preposterously over-paid. During one of the recent examinations before the committee of the House of Commons, a quondam ambassador had the coolness to inform the committee that the reason why the American ambassadors managed to perform their duties for less money than the English ones was, that they lived so much more economically; as if economy were a crime, and a thing to be shunned by any of the numerous representatives of John Bull: and one celebrated ambassador does not see how diplomacy can be carried on at all unless the money of the nation be lavished on banquets, such as even Soyer might envy and admire.

This is the climax of absurdity; and the time has come for such absurdity to be treated with merited contempt. The axe must be laid at the root of the tree. A reduction of salaries commensurate with the increased cheapness of living, and with the difficulties the tax-payers have in meeting the tax-gatherers' demands, must be made at once. It is childish to suppose that p. 217 such a man as Mr. Bancroft was less respected at Paris than the Marquis of Normanby, or that Lord Cowley would less powerfully represent England were his salary of £10,000 cut down to £2,000. A thoughtful man can see, in the glitter and glare of gilded saloons, filled with flunkies and worshippers of the golden calf, nothing very creditable, or worthy of admiration. At the same time it must be remembered that, if the nation has efficient service, it is not grudging as regards expense.

PATERNOSTER ROW.

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The "swinish multitude," as a term of reproach, in these days of ours is gradually becoming less and less in vogue. There were times when gentlemen were not ashamed to use it—when the people, degraded and oppressed, demoralised by the vices of their superiors, were scorned for the degradation which had been forced on them against their will. Not voluntarily did the people give up its inherent rights and its divine power. The struggle was long and severe before the man relinquished his birthright, and sank into a savage or a sot. The divine in man had to be expelled—the instinct in manhood had to be repressed—conscience had to be seared—fatal habits had to be engendered—ere this final consummation took place; and kings, with their brute force and men of war, and with their priests slavish enough blasphemously to affirm the voice of the king was the voice of God, found some trouble in effecting it. But they succeeded in time. They fancied that at last they had controlled what was as much beyond their control as the winds of p. 219 heaven or the ocean's stormy waves. They thought they had inscribed upon humanity at last the proud command: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further." Nor even did the philosopher show himself above the delusion of the age. Gibbon, in closing his story of Rome's decline and fall, pitied the future historian, for whom would exist no parallel passages similar to those which had lent such thrilling charm to his own eventful page. Adam Smith calmly predicted the perpetuity of society as it then was, utterly ignorant of the greatness and the glory yet to come. Yet hardly was the ink dry which recorded these sage predictions, when they were singularly falsified. Suddenly, without one word of warning, without one note of preparation, a change came as the lightning flash. There was a shaking amongst the dry bones—a hurrying to and fro of armed men in the imperial halls of Versailles. The curls that clustered on the fair brow of the daughter of the lion-hearted Maria Theresa in a night became grey. The blood of the heir of a hundred kings was spilt like water. The storm over, Europe witnessed a mighty change; old things had passed away, p. 220 all things had become new: the slavery of the past was gone; the vain tradition of the elders was laughed to scorn: the political emancipation of the people as an idea was already won, and the people—no longer dumb, inarticulate, without intellectual life—conscious of its divine destiny, became what it is. The clouds of ignorance were dispelled; wisdom lifted up her voice in the street; knowledge tabernacled on earth. Hence even the spread of a literature for the people—suited to their wants and capacities—a literature they can buy, and read, and understand.

Some time back the *Times* attempted to persuade us that our cheap shilling volumes were doing us a world of harm. It was grievously shocked to find that the people bought and read them, instead of its healthy and stimulating columns. It thought we were really getting into a very undesirable state. The *Times* told us as proof, that we have now translations of French trashy

novels. We admit we have; but is that anything new? Have we not always had a large class of readers of trashy novels, French or otherwise? and even here have we not proof of progress? p. 221 Have not those very trashy novels lost the indecency which was their characteristic at any earlier time? If we remember aright, Sir Walter Scott states that a lady told him, in looking over some of the novels which were fashionable in her youth she was utterly shocked at the grossness which pervaded them, and that in that respect a most decided improvement had taken place; and is this nothing? is this not a sign of good? Nor is this the only sign; our sterling writers—the classics of our land—are all published in a cheap form, so as to suit the pockets of the people. The literature of the rail even is not so very bad after all. Much of it is light and superficial, undoubtedly; nor is this to be wondered at: the traveller must have something light, or he cannot read at all. The book that requires thought is not for the rail, but the quiet study. Your grave scholars, your most painful divines, now and then put by the dictionary or the commentary, and read, it may be, the *Times*. In both the same law operates. There are occasions when reading for relaxation is a necessity: that necessity the railway literature of the day supplies. But why should the *Times* grow doleful when it records the fact?—or rather the half-fact—for the whole truth is more p. 222 cheering. The whole truth is, that light reading spreads side by side with reading of real merit—that the popular scientific discourse, or history, circulates equally with the novel—not often so trashy after all—for a cheap book must be a good book or it will not pay; and that the more readers of light literature you have, the wider is the circle of readers of better books. A cheap copy of Burns' Poem's might be sold at a profit; we fear a cheap copy of poems by the critic in the *Times* would produce a very different result. To write for the people, a man must write well. The trashy novel, published in three volumes, with a limited sale will pay; it would not published in a cheap form. Only a large sale will remunerate; and a large sale is only the result of some kind of merit.

For proof of this we refer to Paternoster Row. What the press is doing we can best learn there. It is not a place of great pretensions externally, but it has a history, and its fame reaches to the uttermost ends of the earth. Paternoster Row is a short, dark, narrow street, running parallel with Newgate Street and St. Paul's Church Yard. Originally it was chiefly patronised by mercers, p. 223 silkmen, and lacemen. In the reign of Queen Anne the booksellers moved here from Little Britain, and here, in spite of a few successful cases of transplantation to the Strand, or Piccadilly, or Albemarle Street, or Great Marlborough Street, do they chiefly remain. Here was the printing office of Henry Samson Woodfall, the printer of the *Public Advertiser*, in which appeared the celebrated letters of Junius. Some of the firms are very old. The Rivingtons came here in 1710; the Longmans have been here a century and a quarter; Simpkins and Marshall are dead and gone, but their enormous business is still carried on under the old title, and on a magazine day I believe their sales may amount to three thousand pounds. How great is the business carried on here is obvious, when we remember that the Messrs. Longmans' own sale of books has amounted to five millions in one year, and that the annual distribution of books and tracts by the Religious Tract Society, in 1853, was nearly twenty-six millions. When Mr. Routledge could pay Sir Bulwer Lytton £2,000 a year for liberty to publish an eighteen-penny edition of his novels—when the p. 224 same publisher could offer Mr. Barnum £1,200 for his lectures—when for one edition alone, the illustrated, of Mr. Tennyson's poems, their publisher, the late Mr. Moxon, could pay £2,000 to the poet—when one firm alone could subscribe for 4,000 copies of Dr. Livingstone's Researches in Africa—when the paper duty for last year amounted to no less a sum than £1,130,683, it is clear that there must be no little business going on in Paternoster Row. I have before me the London catalogue of periodicals and newspapers for the year 1859, and I find that the monthlies are 353, the quarterlies 64, the newspapers and weekly publications are more than 200. The British catalogue of books published during the year 1851, including new editions, reprints, and pamphlets, has 48 pages, each page containing a list of about 190 works, thus giving us for that year alone 9,120 publications, not magazines or newspapers. Most of the books and journals and magazines thus published find their way into the provinces by means of Paternoster Row. On a publishing day the scene is curious and suggestive; the shops of the large wholesale houses are full, and customers are ranged on one side of the counter in ranks three or four deep, while on p. 225 the other are the assistants toiling like so many slaves; but all the week, especially in the middle, Paternoster Row is very eager and active. Each wholesale house has collectors, who go to the respective publishers for the books ordered. You may meet them at all hours between Paternoster Row and the West. Each collector has a long bag on his back filled with books he has been buying, and a book in his hand which contains entries of what he requires. Some houses make a charge of five per cent. for collecting; those who do not do so give their country clients but a month's credit. The profits of the London houses are not large; they get 13 copies of a work for 12, or 26 charged as 25, and then sell them to the trade at their cost price, 25 per cent. off publishing price. If they are the publishers as well they have the extra profit of ten per cent. for publishing. If a book sells to any extent, the publishers and the trade do well, much better than the poor author, whose obligations to the trade are not great. Let me add that the publishers may do an author a little benefit when they subscribe his book. This is done in the following manner: the publisher, when he has a new book, sends it round to the trade, stating the p. 226 publishing price, and the terms at which he will supply it to the trade. A paper is sent round with it for subscriptions; the large houses, if the book be likely to sell well, subscribe for, in some cases, 2,000 or 3,000 or 4,000 copies, and thus a good sale is secured at first. The advantage of the subscription is, that the trade have a quarter's credit, whereas in their usual transactions they pay cash. This is almost the only speculative part of the business of the houses that do not publish on their own account. It is clear that occasionally they may encumber themselves with a book which does not sell, and for which there is no demand, but this is very rarely the case. The gentleman who buys for the house is generally wide awake, and will not order a single copy more

than he thinks he can sell with advantage, and at once.

Let not my readers go away with the idea that the great bookselling firms, proud of their traditions, plant themselves down in Paternoster Row waiting for customers to come. Their business is no exception to the general rule, which requires excessive pushing to keep pace with the competition of rivals. They have travellers in all quarters of the country—they publish catalogues and their terms, which are everywhere disseminated among the trade—and an author may be sure that it is not the fault of the booksellers that he is compelled to sell his crowning work, rich in graphic colouring, in interesting detail, in noble thought, in manly eloquence (I quote the author's private opinion), to Mr. Tegg or the trunk maker. As I have mentioned Mr. Tegg, let me add, that it is the province of that gentleman to relieve authors and publishers of works which an apathetic public do not appreciate and will not buy. If Mr. Tegg is so fortunate as to purchase the sheets (which he afterwards binds up in a cheap form) at his own price, and sells them at the author's, he ought by this time to be as rich as the Rothschilds or the Marquis of Westminster. What he does with his bargains, I cannot tell. I see them awhile in glaring colours, regardless of the suns of summer or winter snows, adorning the cheap book-stalls of Holborn, or Fleet Street, or the Strand, charming the eye of the juvenile population of the metropolis, and offering them the advantages of a circulating library without the inconvenience. I occasionally meet them in railway carriages, chiefly (I do not write it disrespectfully) third class. I have met with them in considerable numbers in our seaport towns, and then I miss them and search for them in vain. Where are they? I believe I am not far wrong in conjecturing that they are gone where there are

> "Larger constellations burning,
> Mellow moons, and happy skies;"

that they stimulate the intellect or soothe the leisure of muscular gold-diggers at Ballarat; that pastoral New Zealanders read them with delight; that they adorn the drawing-rooms of distant Timbuctoo. Let me say a word for the authors of these works. Are they not true philanthropists? Not one book in a hundred pays, yet in what countless succession do they appear!

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